World War II German Motorized Infantry & Panzergrenadiers

NIGEL THOMAS PhD

ILLUSTRATED BY JOHNNY SHUMATE

Elite • 218

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Series editor Martin Windrow

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For further information on Nigel Thomas or to contact him please refer to his website
nt-associates.com.

COVER PHOTO Panzergrenadier MG42 team, probably from 4th or 5th Pz Div, prepare to support a PzKw V Panther tank in defence of Kovel, north-western Ukraine, some time during March–July 1944. Note two men (left) with Sturmgewehr 44 assault rifles and the associated canvas triple magazine pouches. (Tchakov Collection)

Abbreviations used in text and battle-order tables

Armd	armoured
Bde	brigade
Co	company
Div	Division
Engr	Engineer
Gren	Grenadier
Hvy	Heavy
Inf	Infantry
Lt	Light
Mot	Motorized
M'cycle	Motorcycle
Mtr	Mortar
Ptn	Platoon
PzFus	Panzer Fusilier
PzGren	Panzergrenadier
Regt	Regiment
Repl	Replacement
Sigs	Signals
Sqn	Squadron
Wpns	Weapons

Acronyms

AA	Anti-aircraft
APC	Armoured personnel carrier
AT	Anti-tank
C.	Central
CO	Commanding officer
E.	East
FBD	Führer Escort Div (in German, *Begleit*)
FGD	Führer Grenadier Div
FHH	Feldherrnhalle
GD	Grossdeutschland
HMG	Heavy machine gun
HQ	Headquarters (in German, *Stab*)
IG	Infantry gun
LAA	Light anti-aircraft
LMG	Light machine gun
MG	Machine gun
N.	North
S.	South
SA	Sturmabteilung
SMG	Sub-machine gun
SP	Self-propoelled
W.	West

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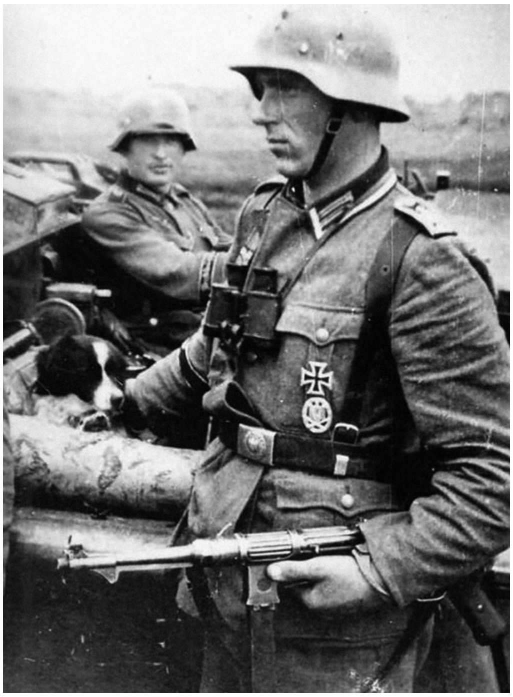
WORLD WAR II GERMAN MOTORIZED INFANTRY & PANZERGRENADIERS

ORIGINS

The German armed forces, the *Reichswehr*, officially formed on 1 January 1921, comprised the Army (*Reichsheer*) and Navy (*Reichsmarine*). It was subject to the restrictions of the Treaty of Versailles, signed 28 June 1919 as a post-Great War settlement; this limited German military strength to 100,000 professional personnel, whilst an air force, a general staff, tanks, anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, and poison gas shells were forbidden.

The *Reichsheer* defied Versailles by assigning cover-names to units prohibited by the Treaty. Thus seven Motor Battalions (*Kraftfahrabteilungen*), numbered 1–7 and ostensibly transport units, trained as tank units. In 1927 *Major* Heinz Guderian joined the Transport Department of the *Truppenamt* (the cover-name for the General Staff). Developing his theories, he concluded that battlefield success required the creation of armoured (*Panzer*) divisions, comprising fast battle tanks with integral infantry, artillery and support services mounted on trucks or tracked personnel carriers.[1] The tanks would bypass the enemy's strongpoints, infiltrate weakly held positions in overwhelming force, and break through the opposing front line, trapping enemy troops in the rear and causing the outflanked front line to collapse. Guderian regarded supporting infantry as essential for a successful armoured force. (His ideas, though distinctive, were influenced or shared by Col John Fuller and Capt Basil Liddell Hart in Great



Feldwebel of the Grossdeutschland Motorized Infantry Regiment, Soviet Union, July 1941. He wears an M1935 field tunic with dark green collar and M1939 collar patches, but M1940 field-grey shoulder straps. He displays the Iron Cross 1st Class, and the M1940 General Assault Badge awarded to motorized infantry before their bronze version of the Infantry Assault Badge was introduced on 1 June 1940. His binoculars and MP40 SMG suggest that he is a platoon commander. He wears on his right sleeve a 'Großdeutschland' cuff title.

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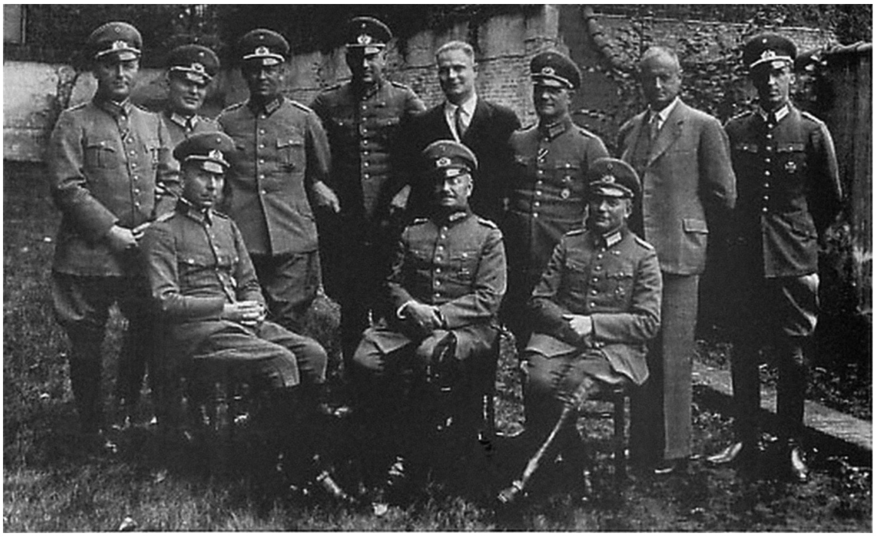
[1] This book covers only Army units, not Waffen-SS or Luftwaffe equivalents.



Generalmajor Oswald Lutz, Inspector of Motor Troops (seated centre) and his staff in 1933. Seated right is his chief-of-staff, *Oberstleutnant* Heinz Guderian, who would command 2nd Panzer Group during Operation *'Barbarossa'* in 1941; seated left is *Major* Walther Nehring, who would command the Africa Corps in 1942. Although Guderian achieved more lasting fame and reputation, it is Lutz who is regarded today as the father of the Panzer troops. Note *Reichsheer* M1920 service uniform with the eight-button tunic still popular during the Third Reich period. The provincial cockade worn on the front of the cap crown would be replaced in February 1934 by the eagle-and-swastika. (Author's collection)

Britain, MajGen Jean-Baptiste Estienne and LtCol Charles de Gaulle in France, and Gen Mikhail Tukhachevsky in the Soviet Union.)

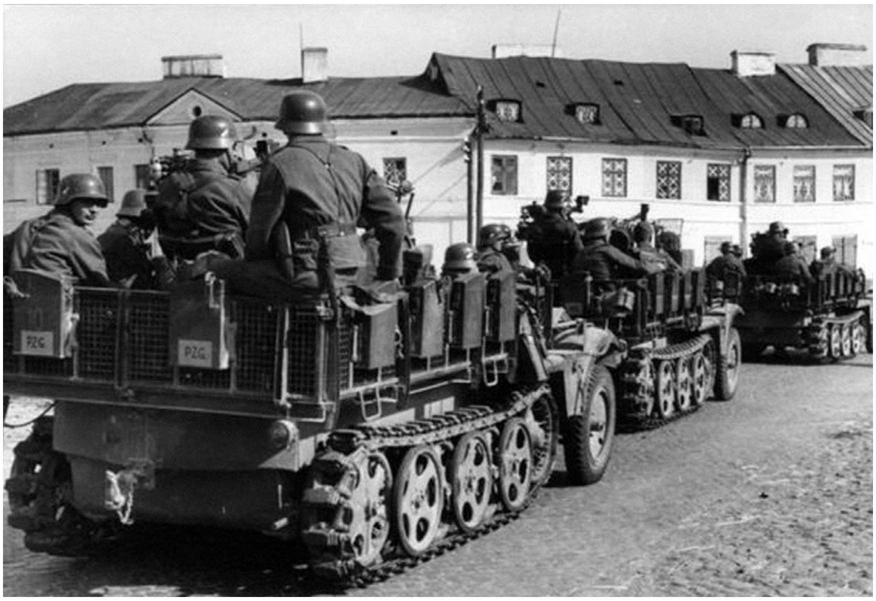
On 1 October 1931 *GenMaj* Oswald Lutz, today regarded as the father of German armoured troops, was appointed Inspector of Motorized Troops with *Obstlt* Guderian as his chief of staff, and the two officers formed a productive relationship. Following the installation of Hitler's National Socialist government in 1933, and the renaming of the *Reichswehr* as the tri-service *Wehrmacht* on 21 May 1935, the first three Panzer divisions (numbered 1–3) were formed on 15 October. On 1 November 1935 Lutz became the first officer to be promoted *General der Panzertruppe,* but on 28 February 1938 he was dismissed during Hitler's purge of senior generals and replaced by Guderian, who was prepared to accommodate Hitler's régime. Guderian went on to pursue a distinguished career, becoming Inspector of Panzer Troops on 1 March 1943 and, on 21 July 1944 with the rank of *Generaloberst*, Chief of the Army General Staff.

Definitions

Motorized infantry followed the advancing tanks in 'softskin' trucks, which carried or towed support weapons such as heavy machine guns, mortars, anti-tank guns and infantry guns. In terrain with a good modern road network (but not elsewhere) they could move as fast as tanks, occupying territory and mopping up resistance. On contact with the enemy they would dismount to fight on foot like ordinary infantry.

In June 1939 the SdKfz 251 halftrack armoured personnel carrier began production, and from September 1939 these vehicles began to transport the Panzer divisions' integral Rifle and later *Panzergrenadier* ('armoured grenadier') regiments. The APCs allowed them to keep up with the tanks' cross-country advance, and to fight as mechanized infantry, engaging the enemy under fire before dismounting.

For ease of reference, in this book the Rifle, Motorized Infantry (Mot Inf) and Panzergrenadier (PzGren) regiments are described under their various parent division types. Individual regiments can be located by using the divisional order-of-battle and deployment Tables 1–5. Motorized infantry and PzGren units were assigned to divisions as follows:



A platoon of motorized infantry make their way through a Polish town in September 1939 mounted on four 8-tonne SdKfz 7 halftrack tractors, one ten-man section per vehicle. The troops are wearing standard infantry uniforms and light field equipment. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 1011-380-0066-27)

- In 43 Panzer Divs, active between 15 October 1935 and 8 May 1945, each with one or two Mot Rifle (19 September 1939, 'Rifle'; 5 July 1942, 'Panzergrenadier') Regts.
- In eight Light Divs, active between 1 April 1938 and 13 May 1943, each with one-three Cavalry Rifle, Rifle or Mot Inf Regts.
- In 17 Motorized Infantry Divs, active between 12 October 1937 and 22 June 1943, each with two-three Mot Inf (15 October 1942, 'Motorized Grenadier') Regts.
- In 15 Panzergrenadier Divs, active between 23 June 1943 and 8 May 1945, mainly organized from former Mot Inf Divs, each with two-three Mot Gren (1 December 1944, 'Panzergrenadier') Regts.

A

BLITZKRIEG, 1939–40

(1) *Oberfeldwebel*, 9th Cavalry Rifle Regt; Bzura, Poland, September 1939

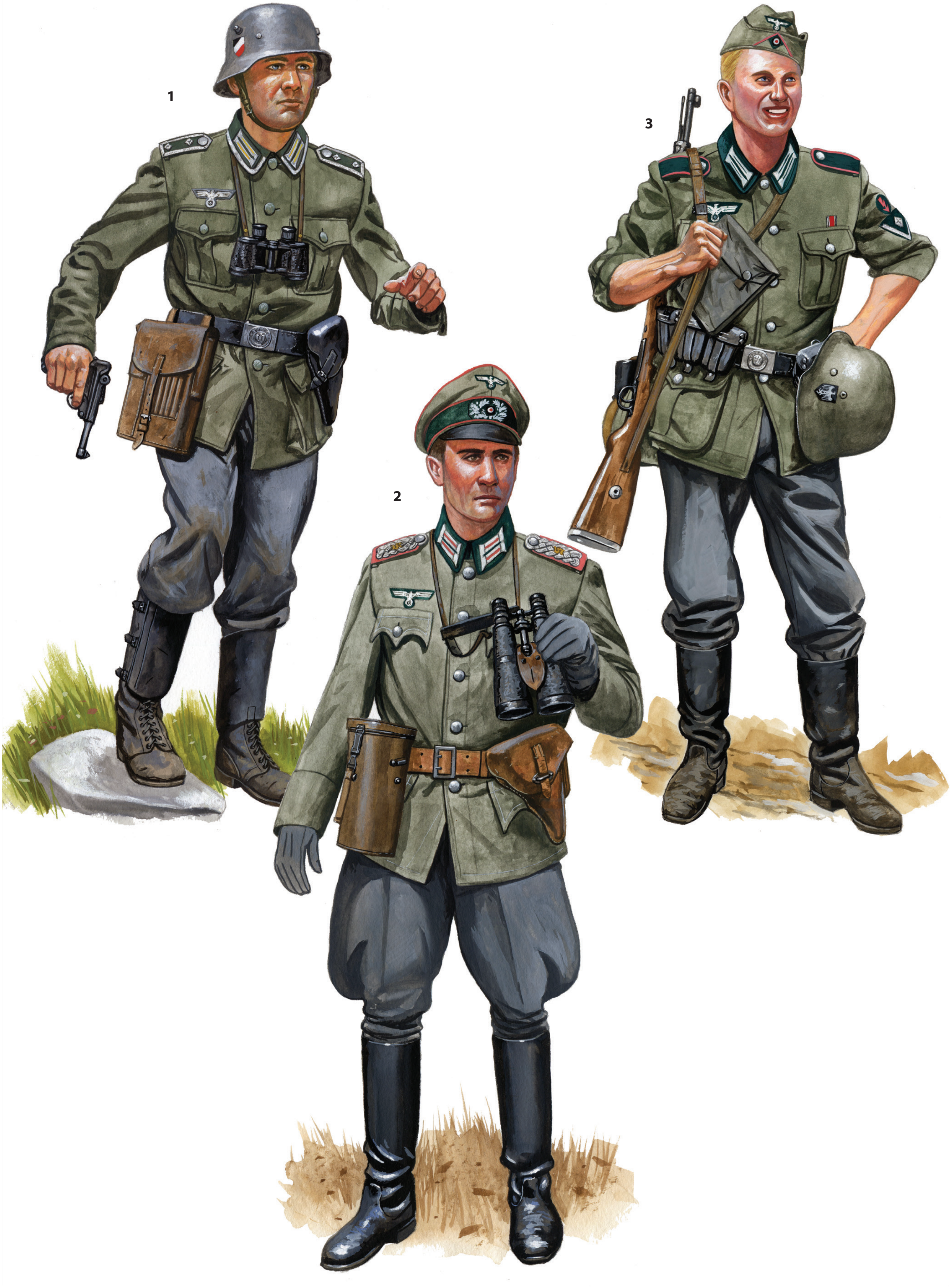
This senior NCO at 9th Regiment HQ, 3rd Light Div wears *Reichsheer* uniform items with Third Reich insignia: M1918 helmet, M1934 field tunic with dark field-grey collar and M1934 pointed shoulder straps braided with NCO *Tresse*, M1935 trousers, and the short-lived M1933 buckle-boots. His M1933 collar braids have Cavalry golden-yellow central pipings; in peacetime his shoulder-straps would have borne the regimental insignia 'S/9'. He wears the enlisted ranks' belt with M1936 buckle, and carries a P08 Luger, Zeiß 6x30 'small binoculars', and an M1935 dispatch case.

***(2) Major*, 1st Rifle Regt; Cheveuges, France, May 1940**

This battalion CO in 1st Pz Div has an M1934 'old style' officers' field cap with embroidered insignia; a remodelled ex-Austrian Army M1933 officer's field tunic, retaining Austrian three-pointed breast-pocket flaps but adding a German M1935 dark green collar; officers' M1920 riding breeches, and M1919 riding boots. His M1932 collar braids have Panzer-pink centre pipings. For security he too has removed the regimental number from his M1940 field shoulder straps, but retains the 'S' for Rifles. He carries a holstered Walther P38 pistol and 10x50 'long binoculars'.

(3) *Obergefreiter mit mehr als 6 Dienstjahren*, 2nd Rifle Regt; Dunkirk, France, May 1940

This 2nd Pz Div 'old sweat', displaying on his left sleeve the chevron-and-star that marks more than six years' service, wears the M1935 field cap with M1937 insignia and Panzer-pink 'Russia braid' chevron (piping with a central line of stitching). His M1935 tunic has a dark green collar with M1938 patches and M1938 shoulder straps, and shows the radio-operator's sleeve badge above his chevron, and the Austrian Occupation Medal ribbon on his left breast. His M1935 trousers are tucked into M1927 long-shaft marching boots. His M1935 helmet hangs by its chinstrap from his rifleman's equipment, which has M1935 concealed supporting straps; visible are the M1911 ammunition pouches, M1938 gas cape on the chest, and M1931 water bottle behind his right hip. Hidden at this angle are the M1931 breadbag and messtin on the back of his belt, the frogged bayonet scabbard and M1934 entrenching tool on the left hip, and the M1936 'short' gasmask canister on the lower back. His weapon is the standard Mauser Kar98k rifle.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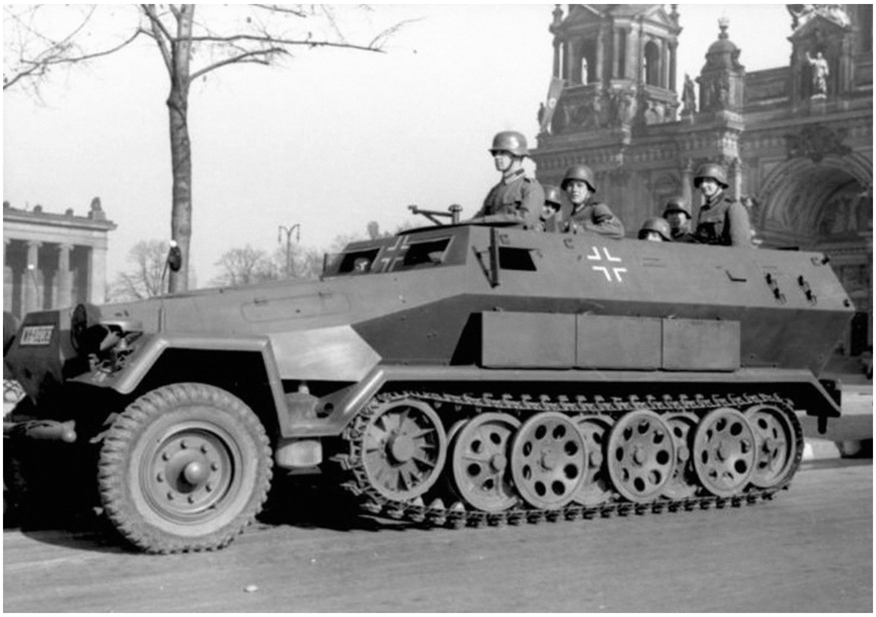
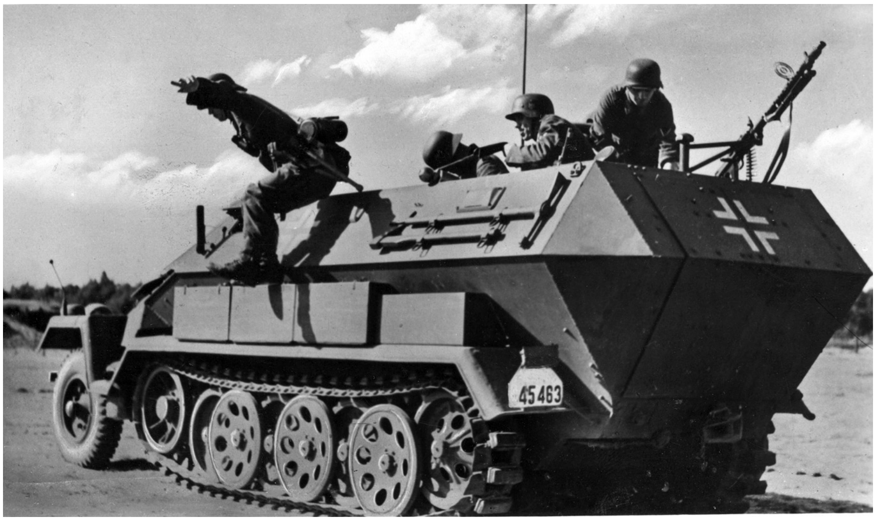


An SdKfz 251/1 Ausf A halftrack personnel carrier, with a partial crew and lacking the front and rear LMGs, photographed probably in Germany before the outbreak of war. This model was unarmoured, being manufactured with 5mm plain steel plates to speed up production; 350 examples had been built by 1940. This was the original version of the personnel carrier which entered service in September 1939; some saw action in the Polish campaign, and with 1st Rifle Regt in the Blitzkrieg against France in May 1940. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-801-0664-37/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)



Although the SdKfz 251/1 had double rear doors, this mounted infantry section photographed in 1940 are practising leaping out over the sides. They have stowed their packs in trucks of the unit's rear echelon, leaving them encumbered only by light battle equipment. The APC has two MG34 LMGs mounted at front and rear. (Nik Cornish at www.Stavka.org.uk)

INFANTRY IN PANZER DIVISIONS, 1935–45

Twenty-seven Panzer Divs (numbered 1–27) were formed between 15 October 1935 and 1 October 1942; 23 of them (numbered 1–20, 22–24) contained Rifle Bdes, formed 12 September 1935–2 December 1941 and carrying the divisional number. A further 16 Panzer Divs were formed 5 April 1943–6 April 1945: six numbered 116, 155, 179, 232, 233 & 273; three elite formations, Panzer Instruction (in German, *Lehr*) numbered 130, and Feldherrnhalle 1 and 2; and eight named divisions or equivalent – Clausewitz, Döberitz/Schlesien, Holstein, Jüterborg, Krampnitz, Müncheberg, Norwegen and Tatra.

Table 1: Infantry in Panzer Divisions (I) (in chronological order of formation, 15 Oct 1935–1 Nov 1940)

1 Panzer Div (formed 15.10.1935), 1 Rifle Bde/Regt 1; Poland (9.1939); W. Germany (12.1939); Luxembourg, France (5.1940); E. Germany (9.1940); Rifle Regt 1, 113 (6.11.1940); N. Russia (6.1941); C. Russia (1.1942); 1 PzGren Bde/Regt 1, 113 (5.7.1942); France (1.1943); Greece (7.1943); Ukraine (11.1943); Hungary (9.1944); surrendered Austria (5.1945).

2 Panzer Div (formed 15.10.1935), 2 Rifle Bde/Regt 2; Poland (9.1939); W. Germany (12.1939); Luxembourg, France, Dunkirk (5.1940); Generalgouvernement (9.1940); Rifle Regts 2, 304 (10.8.1940); Greece (4.1941); N. Russia (10.1941); C. Russia (2.1942); 2 PzGren Bde/Regts 2, 304 (5.7.1942); Kursk (7.1943); Ukraine (10.1943); Belarus (11.1943); N. France (1.1944); Belgium, Battle of the Bulge (12.1944); W. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

3 Panzer Div (formed 15.10.1935), 3 Rifle Bde/Regt 3; Poland (9.1939); Netherlands, Belgium (5.1940); France (6.1940); Rifle Regts 3, 394 (1.8.1940); C. Russia (7.1941); Ukraine (8.1941); S. Russia (6.1942); 3 PzGren Bde/Regts 3, 394 (5.7.1942); Kursk 7.1943); Ukraine (8.1943); Romania (5.1944); Belarus (9.1944); Hungary (1.1945); Austria (4.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

4 Panzer Div (formed 10.11.1938), 4 Rifle Bde/Regt 12; Poland (9.1939); Rifle Regt 12, Inf Regt (mot) 33 (18.10.1939); Rifle Regts 12, 33 (1.4.1940); Netherlands, France (5.1940); Belarus (6.1941); C. Russia (7.1941); Ukraine (8.1941); C. Russia (1.1942); 4 PzGren Bde/Regts 12, 33 (5.7.1942); Kursk (7.1943); Belarus (9.1943); Courland (8.1944); E. Germany (2.1945); surrendered 4.1945).

5 Panzer Div (formed 24.11.1938), 5 Rifle Bde/Regts 13, 14; Poland (9.1939); France (5.1940); Yugoslavia (4.1941); Greece (5.1941); C. Russia (10.1941); 5 PzGren Bde/Regts 13–15 (5.7.1942); Belarus (10.1942); Courland (8.1944); E. Germany (11.1944); surrendered (4.1945).

6 Panzer Div (formed 18.10.1939 from 1 Light Div), 6 Rifle Bde/Regt 4 (1.8.1940); Belgium, France (5.1940); Rifle Regts 4, 114 (1.8.1940); N. Russia (6.1941); C. Russia (10.1941); N. France (5.1942); 6 PzGren Bde/Regts 4, 114 (9.7.1942); S. Russia (12.1942); Ukraine (3.1943); Kursk (7.1943); Belarus (9.1943); Budapest (1.1945); Austria (4.1945); surrendered Bohemia-Moravia (5.1945).

7 Panzer Div (formed 18.10.1939 from 2 Light Div), 7 Rifle Bde/Regt 6 (20.3.1940), Rifle Regt 7 (28.2.1940); Belgium (5.1940); France (6.1940); C. Russia (7.1941); France (6.1942); 7 PzGren Bde/Regts 6, 7 (5.7.1942); Ukraine (1.1943); Courland (8.1944); E. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

8 Panzer Div (formed 16.10.1939 from 3 Light Div), 8 Rifle Bde/Regt 8 (1.4.1940); Belgium (5.1940); France (6.1940); Rifle Regts 8, 28 (1.1.1941); Yugoslavia (4.1941); N. Russia (7.1941); 8 PzGren Bde/Regts 2, 28 (5.7.1942); C. Russia (12.1942); Kursk (7.1943); Ukraine (10.1943); Slovakia (10.1944); Hungary (12.1944); Bohemia-Moravia (2.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

9 Panzer Div (formed 3.1.1940 from 4 Light Div), 9 Rifle Bde/Regt 10 (18.3.1940), Rifle Regt 11 (19.3.1940); Netherlands, France (5.1940); Ukraine (7.1941); S. Russia (11.1941); 9 PzGren Bde/Regts 10, 11 (5.7.1942); Kursk (7.1943); Ukraine (10.1943); S. France (4.1944); Netherlands (10.1944); Belgium, Battle of the Bulge (12.1944); W. Germany (2. 1945); surrendered 5.1945).

10 Panzer Div (formed 1.4.1939), Inf Regt (mot) 86; 10 Rifle Bde/Regts 69, 86 (1.45.1940); France (5.1940); Belarus (7.1941); C. Russia (9.1941); France (5.1942); 10 PzGren Bde/Regts 69, 86 (5.7.1942); Tunisia (12.1942); surrendered (5.1943).

11 Panzer Div (formed 1.8.1940 from 11 Rifle Bde, formed 8.12.1939), 11 Rifle Bde/Regts 110, 111; Ukraine (7.1941); C. Russia (10.1941); S. Russia (7.1942); 11 PzGren Bde/Regts 110, 111 (5.7.1942); Ukraine (2.1943); Romania (4.1944); France (6.1944); W. Germany (10.1944); Belgium, Battle of the Bulge (12.1944); surrendered (4.1945).

12 Panzer Div (formed 10.1.1941 from 2 Inf Div (mot)), 12 Rifle Bde/Regts 5, 25; Belarus (7.1941); C. Russia (8.1941); N. Russia (9.1941); S. Russia (3.1942); 12 PzGren Bde/Regts 5, 25 (10.7.1942); Belarus (10.1942); N. Russia (4.1944); Courland (9.1944); surrendered (4.1945).

13 Panzer Div (formed 11.10.1940 from 13 Inf Div (mot)), 13 Rifle Bde/Training Regts (mot) 66, 93 (6.11.1940); Rifle Regts 66, 93 (28.5.1941); Ukraine (7.1941); S. Russia (12.1941); 13 PzGren Bde/Regts 66, 93 (11.8.1942); Ukraine (9.1943); Romania (5.1944); destroyed Ukraine (8.1944); reformed (28.9.1944); destroyed Budapest (1.1945).

14 Panzer Div (formed 15.8.1940 from 4 Inf Div), 14 Rifle Bde/Regts 103, 108; Yugoslavia (4.1941); Ukraine (7.1941); S. Russia (10.1941); 14 PzGren Bde/Regts 103, 108 (18.7.1942); destroyed Stalingrad (2.1943); reformed W. France (3.1943); Ukraine (11.1943); Romania (4.1944); Courland (8.1944); surrendered (4.1945).

20 Panzer Div (formed 15.10.1940 from 19 Inf Div), 20 Rifle Bde/Regts 59, 112; Belarus (7.1941); C. Russia (8.1941); S. Russia (2.1942); 20 PzGren Bde/Regts 59, 112 (5.7.1942); Kursk (7.1943); Belarus (9.1943); Bobruisk (Bagration) (6–8.1944); Romania (8.1944); E. Prussia (10.1944); Silesia (2.1945); surrendered E. Germany (5.1945).

18 Panzer Div (formed 26.10.1940 from 4, 14 Inf Div); 18 Rifle Bde/Regts 52, 101; C. Russia (7.1941); S. Russia (1.1942); 18 PzGren Bde/Regt 52, 101 (5.7.1942); Kursk (7.1943); C. Russia (8.1943); Belarus (9.1943); disbanded (29.9.1943).

15 Panzer Div (formed 1.11.1940 from 33 Inf Div), 15 Rifle Bde/Regts 104, 115; Rifle Regt 115 (1.9.1942); Libya (5.1941); El Alamein (11.1942); 15 PzGren Bde/Regt 115 (5.7.1942); Tunisia (12.1942); surrendered (5.1943).

16 Panzer Div (formed 1.11.1940 from 16 Inf Div), 16 Rifle Bde/Regts 64, 79; Romania (12.1940); Ukraine (6.1941); S. Russia (10.1941); 16 PzGren Bde/Regts 64, 79 (5.7.1942); destroyed Stalingrad (2.1943); reformed N. France (4.1943); S. Italy (6.1943); Belarus (12.1943); Ukraine (1.1944); Generalgouvernement (7.1944); Silesia (2.1945); Bohemia-Moravia (4.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

17 Panzer Div (formed 1.11.1940 from 27 Inf Div), 17 Rifle Bde/Regts 40, 63; C. Russia (7.1941); S Russia (1.1942); 17 PzGren Bde/Regts 40, 63 (5.7.42); Ukraine (3.1943); Generalgouvernement (4.1944); PzGren Regt 40 (12.1944); reformed as Battle Group (1.1945); Oder (2.1945); Bohemia-Moravia (3.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

19 Panzer Div (formed 1.11.1940 from 19 Inf Div), 19 Rifle Bde/Regts 73, 74; Belarus (7.1941); C. Russia (8.1941); PzGren Bde/Regts 73, 74 (13.7.1942); S. Russia (1.1943); Ukraine (4.1943); Kursk (7.1943); Warsaw Uprising (8.1944); Battle of Silesia (2.1945); Bohemia-Moravia (4.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

Pre-war composition, 1935–39

The first three 14,373-strong Panzer Divs (numbered 1–3), were formed 15 October 1935. A *Panzerdivision 35*, commanded by a *Generalleutnant* (in wartime, *Generalmajor*), included two two-battalion Pz Regts, a Motorized Rifle Bde, and support units and services. 1st–3rd Mot Rifle Bdes (*Schützenbrigade (mot)*), usually under an *Oberst*, comprised a Bde HQ, a Mot Rifle Regt (*Schützen-Regiment (mot)*), and a Motorcycle Battalion. An M1935 Mot Rifle Regt, commanded by an *Oberst* (wartime, *Oberstleutnant* or *Major*), had a Regt HQ (with sigs ptn); a supply column (half-company); and ten cos in two motorized bns on trucks. The regiment's I Mot Rifle Bn (*Schützen-Bataillon (mot)*), under an *Oberstleutnant* or *Major* (wartime,

The HQ Co (Stabskompanie) of I Bn/ 11th Rifle Regt from 9th Pz Div on the march in France, May 1940; the company commander is seen at front left. Marching at ease, they are clearly well behind the front line. This regiment had been the Austrian Army's 2nd 'Radetsky' Motorized Bn; it was redesignated 11th Cavalry Rifle Regt on 1 August 1938, and 11th Rifle Regt on 19 March 1940. (Author's collection)

Hauptmann), had a Bn HQ; 1st & 2nd Rifle Cos (6x LMGs, 2x HMGs, 3x 5cm light mortars); 3rd Motorcycle Co (same weapons); 4th MG Co (8x HMGs, 6x LMGs; abolished 1938); 5th Heavy Weapons Co (3-gun 3.7cm AT ptn; 2-gun 7.5cm infantry gun (IG) ptn; engr ptn). II Bn had the same organization, in 6th–10th Companies.

A 201-man Rifle Co (*Schützenkompanie*), under a *Hauptmann* (wartime, *Oberleutnant* or *Leutnant*), had three (1939, four; later three) 48- to 50-strong ptns (*Zug*), 1st & 2nd Ptns each under a *Leutnant*, 3rd & 4th Ptns each under an *Oberfeldwebel* or *Feldwebel* (in late wartime all platoon commanders were usually NCOs). A section or squad (*Gruppe*) had ten men under a junior NCO (late wartime, *Obergefreiter* or *Gefreiter*).

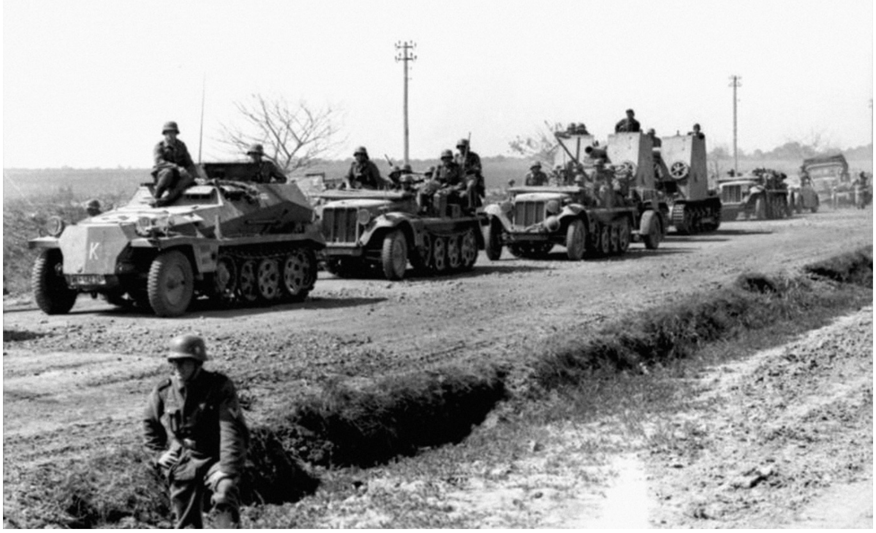
The 1st–3rd Pz Divs were held in reserve during the Rhineland occupation, 7 March 1936; 2nd helped annexe Austria, 12 March 1938; 1st occupied the Czechoslovak Sudetenland, 1–10 October 1938; and 3rd invaded Bohemia-Moravia (now Czech Republic) on 15 March 1939.

Following the Munich Agreement of 30 September 1938, 4th and 5th Pz Divs were formed. Both Rifle Bdes had non-standard organizations, with four-company bns with 1st–3rd Rifle and 4th Hvy Wpns cos; 4th Rifle Bde had no Bde HQ or HQ Co, while 5th Rifle Bde had two Rifle Regiments.

An M1939 Rifle Regt had a Regt HQ (sigs and m'cycle ptns), and ten cos in two bns: I Bn with 1st & 2nd Rifle Cos, 3rd M'cycle, 4th MG, and 5th Hvy Wpns; and II Bn the same, with 6th–10th Companies. Mortar and infantry-gun firepower was increased. 10th Pz Div, forming in April 1939 as the occupation force for Bohemia-Moravia, included one Mot Rifle Regiment.

First Panzer expansion, 1939–40

All six Panzer Divs fought in Poland, 1 September–2 October 1939. From 19 September 1939 their integral motorized units dropped the (*mot*) suffix. By January 1940 four more Panzer Divs (numbered 6–9) had been reorganized from Light Divs (with their Cavalry Rifle Regts redesignated Rifle Regiments). 4th, 5th and 10th Pz Divs were brought up to strength, and an additional 11th Rifle Bde formed. Six Panzer Divs (4, 5, 7–10) and



A Rifles company advance along dusty Russian roads in June 1941. The leading vehicle is an SdKfz 250 light halftrack, used for command or reconnaissance; note that at this date it is still followed by two 8-tonne SdKfz 7 tractors employed as personnel carriers. Behind them are two 15cm self-propelled heavy infantry guns. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-186-0184-02A/ Otto/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

Summer 1942, southern Russia: a Panzergrenadier officer gestures to his men taking cover beside a StuG III armoured SP assault gun. In odd contrast to the reflective silver insignia on his M1935 uniform, he and one of his soldiers appear to have blackened their faces as camouflage. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-B28822/ CC-BY-SA 3.018)

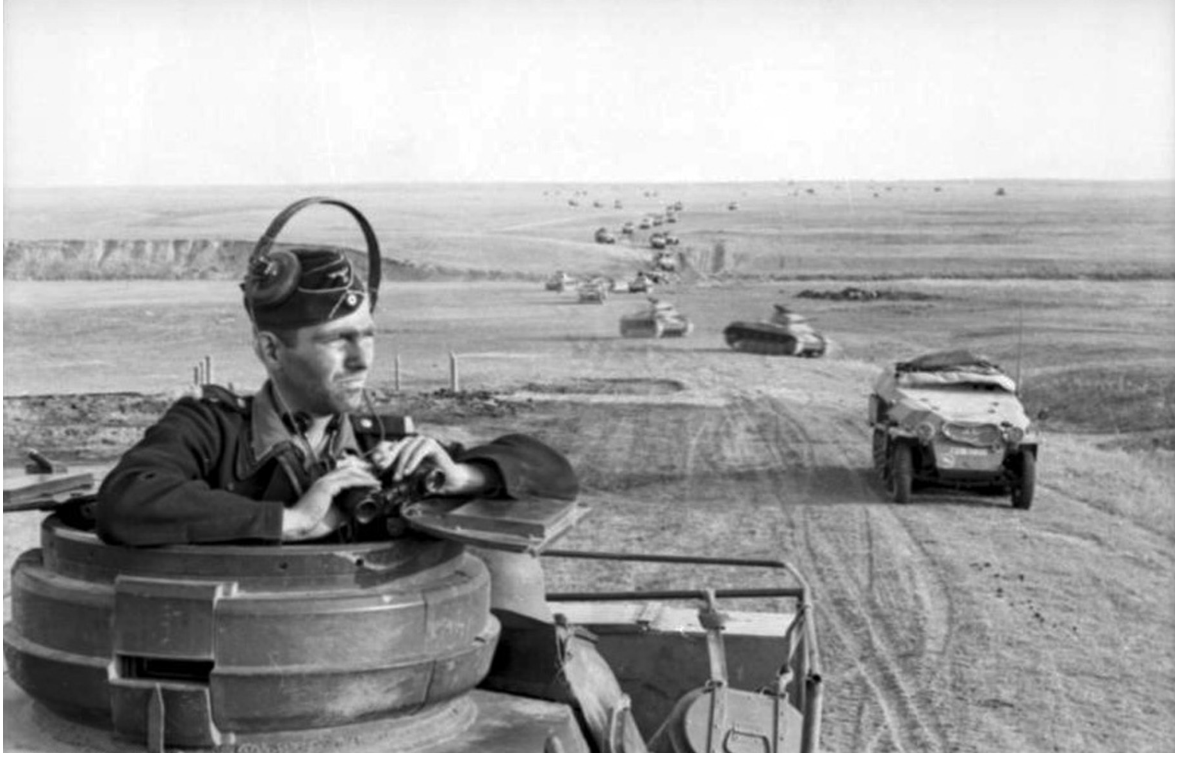
11 Bde now had two rifle regts. The ten Panzer Divs and 11 Bde fought in the Western campaign,10 May–22 June 1940. Two (1 & 2) fought in Luxembourg; three (3, 4 & 9) in the Netherlands; four (3, 6–8) in Belgium; and ten (1–10), plus 11 Rifle Bde, in France.

Second expansion, 1940–41

Following the armistice with France on 22 June 1940 a further ten Panzer Divs were formed August–November 1940. 11th Pz Div was formed from 11th Rifle Bde; 12th and 13th converted from Mot Inf Divs; 14th-17th and 19th formed from unmotorized infantry divs, and 18th and 20th from various surplus units. This achieved the pre-war target of 20 Panzer Divisions.

The M1940 Rifle Regt comprised a Regt HQ and HQ Co (sigs, m'cycle and engr ptns), and 10 cos in two bns: I Bn with 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 3

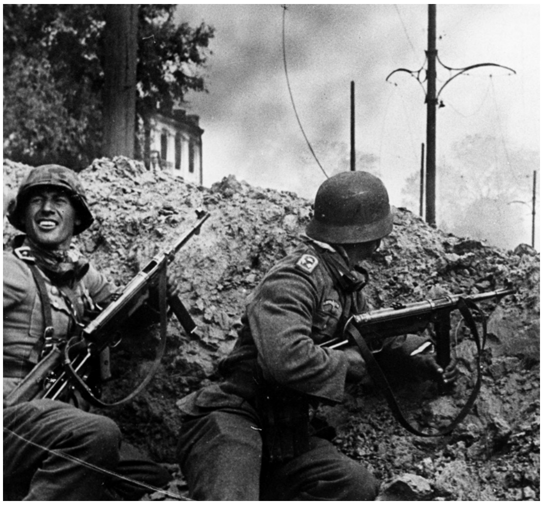
Near the Don river, southern Russia, summer 1942: during the advance to Stalingrad, these Panzergrenadiers have dismounted from their SdKfz 250 light APC and are inspecting a disabled Soviet tank. Again, they retain only belt equipment. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-218-0503-19/ Klintzsch/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)



The dusty commander of a PzKw III tank of 24th Panzer Regt, 24th Pz Div in a long column of armour advancing across the endless steppes of southern Russia, September 1942, on their way to Stalingrad. He wears the M1935 black Panzer uniform piped in this division's Cavalry yellow; the NCO candidate's shoulder-strap loops suggest that he is probably an *Obergefreiter* or *Gefreiter*. The second vehicle is an SdKfz 251 halftrack APC and those in the distance appear to be PzKw II light tanks. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-218-0510-22/ Thiede /CC-BY-SA 3.0)

Rifle, 1 Hvy ptns, with 18x LMG, 3x HMG and 3x 5cm mtrs); 4th MG Co (2 MG ptns with 8x HMGs, 1 mtr ptn with 6x 8cm); and 5th Hvy Wpns Co (IG ptn with 2x guns, AT ptn with 2x guns, engr ptn). II Bn had the same, in 6th–10th Companies.

During the period 22 June 1940–22 June 1941, 13 Panzer Divs operated at various times outside Germany: five (1, 4, 7, 8 & 10) on occupation duties in France; four (2, 5, 9 & 11) in Poland; six (2, 5, 9, 11, 13 & 16) in Romania training the Romanian Army; five (5, 8, 9, 11 & 14) in Yugoslavia, April 1941; two (2 & 5) in Greece, April–June 1941; and one (15) in North Africa.



15 September 1942: a *Feldwebel* (left) and a *Stabsfeldwebel* from 24th Pz Div's 21st or 26th Rifle Regt crawl through the rubble of Stalingrad towards the city's South railway station. Both carry MP40s and minimal equipment, suggesting that they are platoon commanders. The *Feldwebel* has acquired a Waffen-SS issue camouflage cover for his helmet. (Author's collection)

Third expansion, 1941–42

Hitler believed that the invasion of the European part of the Soviet Union up to the Archangel-Astrakhan ('A-A') Line could be completed in 42 days. Nineteen Panzer Divs were earmarked for the invasion, and were later reinforced by four more formed August 1941–October 1942 and numbered 22, 23, 24 (ex-1 Cavalry Div) and

Table 2: Infantry in Panzer Divisions (II) (in chronological order of formation, 1 Aug 1941–6 Apr 1945)

21 Panzer Div (formed 1.8.1941 from 5 Light Div), Rifle Regt 104, Libya; PzGren Regt 104 (5.7.1942); Tunisia (2.1943); PzGren Regts 47, 104 (26.2.1943); destroyed (5.1943); reformed (15.7.1943) from Mobile Bde 931, PzGren Regts 125, 192; France; destroyed Normandy (6.1944); reformed E. France (9.1944); W. Germany (12.1944); Oder (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

23 Panzer Div (formed 21.9.1941), 23 Rifle Bde/Regts 126, 128, France; Ukraine (4.1942); S. Russia (7.1942); 23 PzGren Bde/Regts 126, 128 (5.7.1942); Ukraine (9.1943); Generalgouvernement (8.1944); Hungary (10.1944); surrendered Austria (5.1945).

22 Panzer Div (formed 25.9.1941), 22 Rifle Bde/Regts 129, 140, N. France; S. Russia (3.1942); 22 PzGren Bde/Regts 129, 140 (5.7.1942); Stalingrad relief force, S. Russia (2. 1943); reformed as Brugsthaler Battlegroup (4.3.1943); absorbed in 23 Panzer Div (4.1943).

24 Panzer Div (formed 28.11.1941 from 1 Cavalry Div), 24 Rifle Bde/Regts 21, 26; S. Russia (6.1942); 24 PzGren Bde/Regts 21, 26 (5.7.1942); destroyed Battle of Stalingrad (1.1943); reformed 4.1943 (N. France); N. Italy (9.1943); Ukraine (11.1943); Romania (4.1944); Hungary (10.1944); Slovakia (12.1944); E. Prussia (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

25 Panzer Div (formed 25.2.1942), Rifle Regt 145, Norway; Rifle Regts 145, 146.(19.5.1942 from Oslo Rifle Regt); PzGren Regts 145, 146 (5.7.1942); Ukraine (12.1943); almost destroyed (2.1944); reformed Denmark (6.1944); Warsaw Uprising (8.1944); Belarus (10.1944); Generalgouvernement (11.1944); Oder (2.1945); Austria (4.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

26 Panzer Div (formed 14.9.1942 from 23 Inf Div), 26 PzGren Bde/Regts 9, 67, N. France; S. Italy (8.1943); Battle of Salerno (9.1943); Battle of Anzio (1.1944); N. Italy (6.1944); surrendered (4.1945).

27 Panzer Div (formed 1.10.1942 from 22 Panzer Div), PzGren Regt 140, S. Russia; Ukraine (1.1943); disbanded, remaining troops absorbed by 7 Panzer Div (15.2.1943).

155 Panzer Div (formed 5.4.1943 from 155 Div (mot)), Rifle Depot Regt 5, Germany; 155 Reserve Pz Div (1.8.1943), Reserve PzGren Regt 5, Reserve Gren Regt 25 (mot), France; disbanded 19.3.1944.

Norwegen Panzer Div (formed 1.10.1943 from 21 Panzer Bde), Norwegen PzGren Regt, Norway; disbanded (1.7.1944).

233 Panzer Div (formed 5.4.1943); redesignated 233 Reserve Panzer Div, Reserve PzGren Regts 5, 83, Denmark; 83 Reserve PzGren Regt 83, Reserve Gren Regt (mot) 3; Reserve PzGren Regts 3, 83; redesignated Panzer Div Holstein with PzGren Regts 139, 142 (5.2.1945); redesignated 233 Panzer Div with Reserve PzGren Bns 8, 9, 50, 93 (15.2.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

179 Reserve Panzer Div (formed 30 7. 1943 from 179 Pz Div), Reserve Mot Gren Regt 29, Reserve PzGren Regts 29, 81, France; reinforced 116 Pz Div; disbanded (1.5.1944).

273 Reserve Pz Div (formed 1.11.1943), Reserve Mot Gren Regt 73, Reserve PzGren Regt 92, S. France; reinforced 11 Pz Div (15.3.1944).

Panzer Instruction Div (formed 10.1.1944 from training units), PzGren Instruction Regts 901, 902, France; Battle of Normandy (6–8.1944); Belgium, Battle of the Bulge (11.1944); W. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

116 Panzer Div (formed 28.3.1944 from 16 PzGren Div), PzGren Regts 60, 156, N. France; Normandy (7.1944); W. Germany (8.1944); Battle of the Bulge, Belgium, (12.1944); W. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

Tatra Panzer Div (formed 8.1944), PzGren Replacement & Training Regts 82, 85, Slovakia; redesignated Tatra Panzer Field Training Div (12.1944); reformed as 232 Panzer Div (2.1945).

Feldherrnhalle Panzer Div (formed 27.11.1944 from Feldherrnhalle PzGren Div), PzGren Regts FHH I–III, Hungary (11.1944), Slovakia (3.1945); redesignated 1 Feldherrnhalle Pz Div (3.1945), Slovakia; surrendered Bohemia-Moravia (8.5.1945).

232 Panzer Div (formed 2.1945 from Tatra Panzer Field Training Div), Slovakia; PzGren Regts 101, 102; destroyed Austria (3.1945).

Holstein Panzer Div (formed 10.2.1945 from 233 Reserve Pz Div), PzGren Regts 139,142; destroyed E. Germany (3.1945).

Jüterborg Panzer Div (formed 20.2.1945), PzGren Regt Jüterborg; Silesia; disbanded (3.1945).

Döberitz / Schlesien Panzer Div (formed 20.2.1945), PzGren Regt Schlesien; Silesia; disbanded (3.1945).

2 Feldherrnhalle Panzer Div (formed 3.1945 from 13 Panzer Div), PzGren Regt 66; Slovakia (4.1945); surrendered Bohemia-Moravia (5.1945).

Müncheberg Panzer Div (formed 8.3.1945 from Panzer Bde 103), PzGren Regts Müncheberg 1, 2, E. Germany; Oder (4.1945); destroyed Berlin (5.1945).

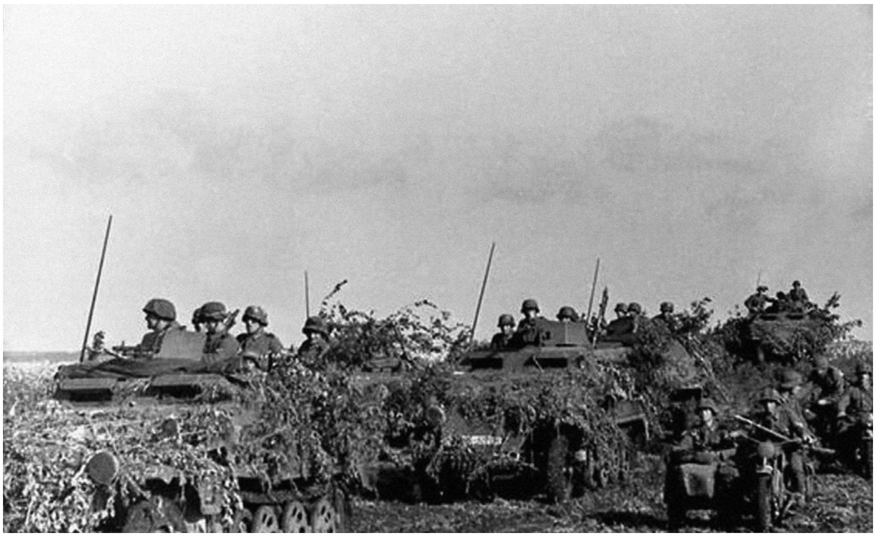
Krampnitz Panzer Replacement Unit (formed 28.3.1945), PzGren Regt Krampnitz 1, 2; E. Germany; disbanded (8.5.1945).

Clausewitz Panzer Div (formed 6.4.1945), PzGren Replacement & Training Regt Feldherrnhalle, PzGren Regt 42, W. Germany; destroyed (21.4.1945).

27. In 1941 there were three Panzer Divs (1, 6 & 8) in Army Group North, aiming at the Baltic States and Leningrad (now St Petersburg); 11 (2–5, 7, 10, 12, 17–20) in Army Group Centre, for Belarus, western Russia and Moscow; and nine (9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 22–24 & 27) in Army Group South, for Ukraine and southern Russia. Three other Panzer Divs were formed during 1941–42 for other fronts: 21st for North Africa, 25th for the Norway garrison, and 26th for the garrison of France.

General der Panzertruppe Erwin Rommel's forces in North Africa, 14 February 1941–12 May 1943, comprised the *Deutsches Afrika Korps*, expanded 1 September 1941 to form 'Panzer Group Africa'; on 1 October 1942 as 'German-Italian Panzer Army Africa'; and finally on 22 February 1943 as 'Army Group Africa'. Rommel had three Panzer Divs, numbered 10, 15 & 21, with 104th and 115th Rifle Regts each receiving 3rd Bns during 1942.

An armoured PzGren company from a Panzer Div drive through the devastated streets of Kharkov, Ukraine, on 15 March 1943 after the third battle to take the city. Some appear to wear reversible 1942 winter uniforms grey-side out. (Author's collection)

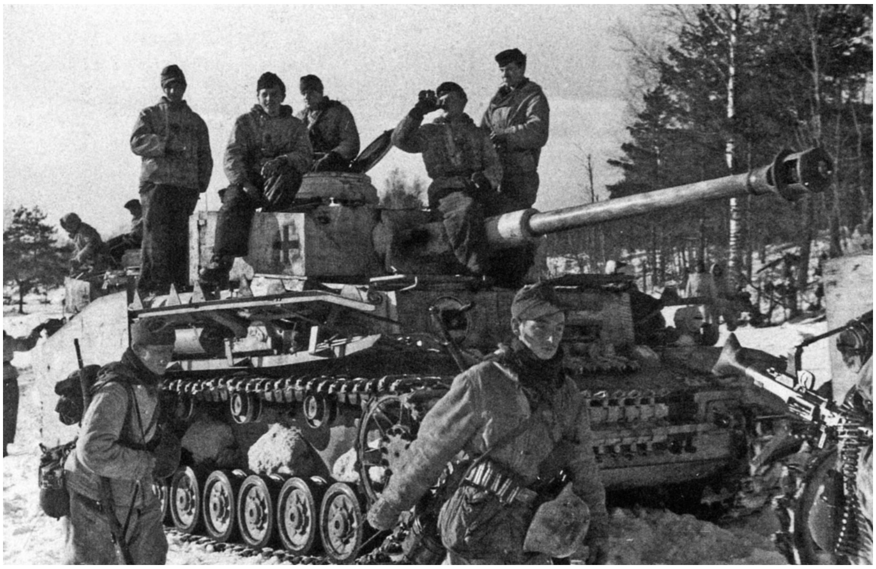


Ukraine, summer 1944: an armoured Panzergrenadier platoon advance in SdKfz 251 APCs well covered in camouflage netting and branches; the troops wear helmet covers, but apparently not camouflage smocks. The motorcycle combination is probably from the regimental HQ company, which had a motorcycle platoon for reconnaissance and liaison. (Author's collection)

Panzergrenadiers, 1942–45

As a mark of recognition that mechanized and motorized infantry constituted an important element in the armoured forces, 'Rifles' (*Schützen*) were redesignated 'Armoured Infantry' (*Panzergrenadiere*) during 5 July–11 August 1942. The 23 Rifle Bdes allocated to 23 Panzer Divs (21st & 25th Pz Divs had only one regt each) were redesignated 23 PzGren Bdes, numbered 1–20 and 22–24. The formation of 26th Pz Div on 27 July 1942 saw the creation of the last *Panzergrenadierbrigade*.

The 24 PzGren Bdes comprised 48 regiments, numbered: 1–14, 21, 25–26, 28, 33, 40, 52, 59, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69, 73, 74, 79, 86, 93, 101, 103, 104, 108, 110–115, 126, 128, 129, 140, 304 & 394. The 1942 *Panzergrenadierregiment* comprised a Regt HQ; HQ Co (9x LMGs, 3x AT guns); and 10 cos: I Bn with 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 18x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs) and 4th Hvy Wpns; II Bn organized the same with 5th–8th Cos; plus 9th IG and 10th LAA companies.



Ukraine, January 1944: Panzergrenadiers passing a broken-down PzKw IV tank awaiting recovery. They and the tank crew all appear to wear reversible winter uniforms with the grubby white side outermost. The man in centre foreground has his white-painted helmet hanging from his rifle-equipment belt, and wears the M1943 peaked field cap. His comrade (left) still has the M1942 sidecap-style field cap; he wears an A-frame battle pack hooked to infantry supporting straps, and a very full breadbag behind his belt. (Tchakov Collection)

In the foreground a three-man LMG team, probably from either 4th or 5th Pz Div, pass a PzKw V Panther tank near Kovel, north-western Ukraine, at some date between March and July 1944. The first gunner carries the MG42 slung, while his team-mates (left & right), who are both armed with StG 44 assault rifles, manhandle the heavy ammunition boxes. (Tchakov Collection)

During November 1942 to summer 1943 the PzGren Bde HQs gradually disappeared from divisional orders of battle, leaving the two PzGren Regts reporting directly to Panzer Div Headquarters.

During 1942 there were 27 Panzer Divs available for deployment: two (8 & 12) in northern Russia; 11 (1, 2, 4–8, 10–12 & 19) in Belarus and central Russia; eight (3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 22 & 23) in Ukraine, southern Russia and the Caucasus; plus 14 (6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 16–18, 20, 22–24, 26 & 27) in France, one (25) in Norway, and two (15 & 21) in North Africa.

Panzer Divisions, 1943–44

In April 1943 two Panzer Divs, numbered 155 & 233 and containing reserve units, joined the divisions numbered 1–27. On 24 September 1943 all except 21st Pz Div were reorganized according to the *Panzer-Division 43* plan. This developed from the M1942 organization, but the PzGren Regts now comprised the HQ; HQ Co (sigs, AT, IG and m'cycle ptns); I (Armoured) Bn, II (Motorized) Bn, plus 9th and 10th Companies.

I Bn was an armoured infantry unit (*gepanzert,* abbreviated *gep*.), with troops mounted on halftrack APCs and fighting with massively increased MG firepower as mechanized infantry. I Bn had 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (39x LMGs, 4x HMGs , 2x 8cm mtrs, 3x 3.7cm & 2x 7.5cm AT guns); and 4th Hvy Wpns Co, with an AT ptn (3x 7.5cm, 9x LMGs); an IG ptn (2x 7.5cm, 4x LMGs); and a field gun battery (6x 7.5cm guns). The truck-mounted II Bn had 5th–7th Rifle Cos (18x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs), and 8th Hvy

January 1945: five Panzergrenadiers from either 12th or 14th Pz Div trapped in Courland, southern Latvia. Some seem to wear the issue tubular 'toque' scarf/balaclava rolled around their M1943 field caps. (Author's collection)

Wps Co (AT ptn with 3x 7.5cm, 3x LMGs; m'cycle ptn with 6x LMGs). 9th IG Co had 6x self-propelled 15cm heavy guns and 7x LMGs. 10th Co were now assault engineers (ptn with 5x flamethrowers, 1 x 3.7cm IG, 13x LMGs; and two ptns each with 12x flamethrowers and 8x LMGs).

Initially only I Bn of the senior (lower-numbered) motorized PzGren Regt in the brigade would be **armoured**, allowing a Panzer Div to deploy one armoured and three motorized bns, but distribution was far from uniform. In the second half of the war some Panzer Divs had two halftrack infantry bns and some only one or two companies. The following two complete PzGren Regts, 35 PzGren Bns, and five independent PzGren Cos are believed to have had halftracks, grouped here by Panzer division. The abbreviations indicate e.g. '1/1' = 1st Co/ 1st PzGren Regt; 'I/113' = 1st Bn/ 113th PzGren Regt, etc.

1st Pz Div (1/1, 6/1, 11/1, I/113); *2nd Pz Div* (I/2, 1 & 2/304); *3rd Pz Div* (I/3, 2/394); *4th Pz Div* (I/12); *5th Pz Div* (I/14); *6th Pz Div* (I/4, II/114); *7th Pz Div* (II/6); *8th Pz Div* (I/98); *9th Pz Div* (I/10, I/11); *10th Pz Div* (II/69);

B

BALKANS & GERMANY, 1941

(1) *Leutnant*, 156th Motorized Infantry Regt; Sarajevo, Yugoslavia, April 1941

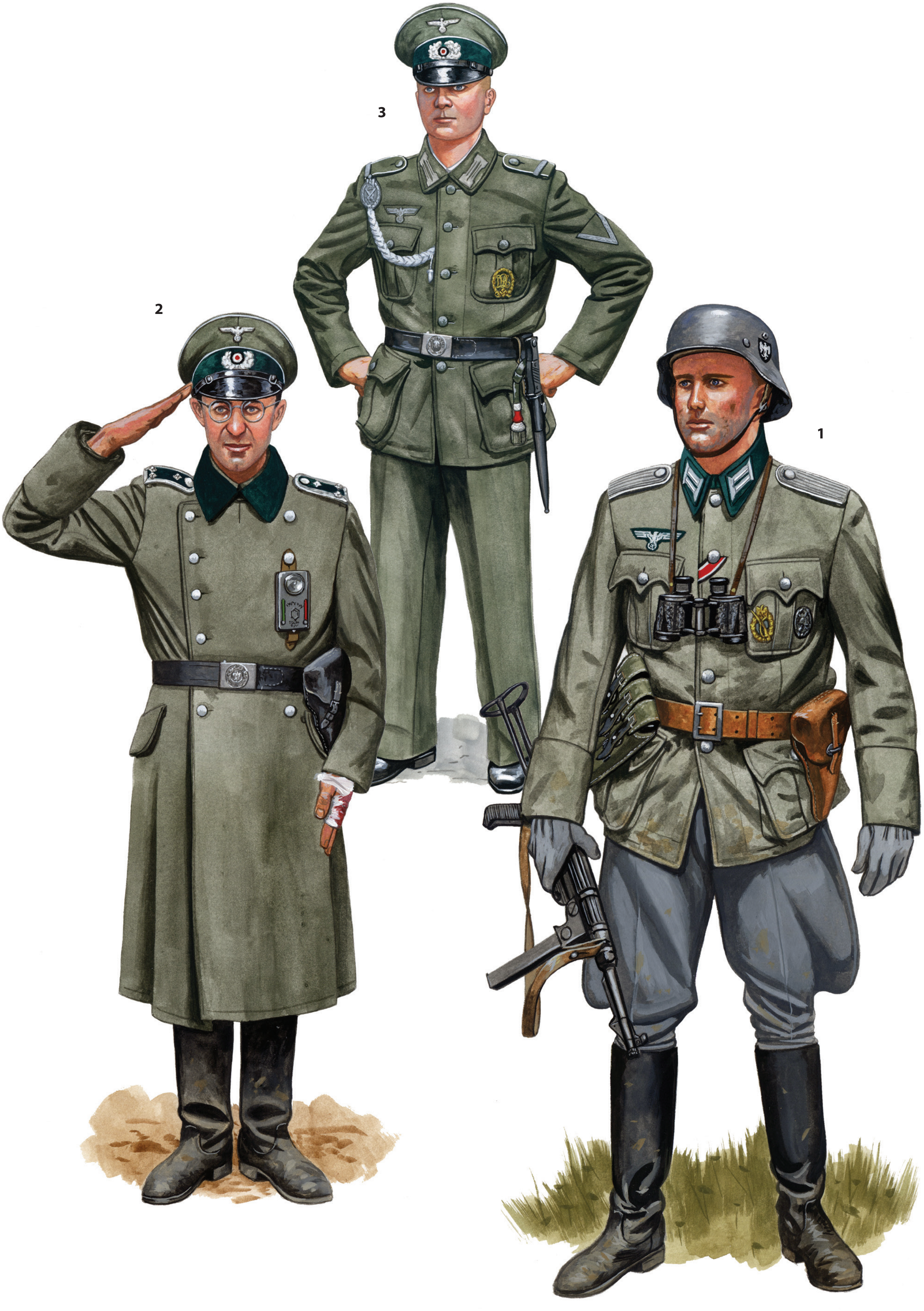
This 16th Mot Inf Div officer wears an M1935 helmet painted slate-grey with the right tricolour shield removed. His M1935 tunic has M1935 collar patches with Infantry-white pipings, and M1940 field shoulder straps with white underlay. He wears an M1937 hand-embroidered officers' breast eagle, and displays the Iron Cross 2nd Class buttonhole-ribbon, M1940 Motorized Infantry Assault Badge, and a black Wound Badge. His platoon commanders' field equipment comprises an M1938 belt, Walther P38 pistol, 6x30 'small binoculars', and one set of M1938 magazine pouches for his MP38 sub-machine gun.

(2) *Stabsschirrmeister (K)*, 125th Infantry Regt; Fort Rupel, Greece, April 1941

This Motor Transport sergeant-major at the Regt HQ of this recently motorized unit salutes Maj Dourantsos's Greek Army detachment retiring undefeated from their Metaxas Line fort. He wears the M1935 enlisted ranks' service cap often preferred by senior NCOs in field uniform, with Infantry-white piping. The M1935 greatcoat has shoulder-strap rank insignia. He carries a P08 pistol and a Petrix field flashlight. Obscured here is his yellow Gothic-S trade badge on a dark green disc edged with silver cord, worn on the right forearm.

(3) *Gefreiter (UA)*, 120th Motorized Infantry Regt; Greifswald, Germany, June 1941

This soldier of 60th Mot Inf Div wears walking-out uniform, with the M1935 service cap, M1940 field tunic and trousers, and M1934 ankle-boots. His insignia include an M1940 breast eagle, a mouse-grey braid rank chevron, and an NCO candidate's shoulder-strap loop; he displays the M1937 bronze National Sports Badge, and a 1st Level M1936 rifle marksman's lanyard. His bayonet is decorated with the white and red *Troddel* knot identifying the 5th Company, II Bn of all regiments.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11th Pz Div (I/110, 1/111); *12th Pz Div* (I/5, I/25); *13th Pz Div* (I/66); *14th Pz Div* (I/103); *16th Pz Div* (I/64); *17th Pz Div* (I/40); *18th Pz Div* (1/52); *19th Pz Div* (I/73); *20th Pz Div* (I/59); *21st Pz Div* (I/125, I/192); *22nd Pz Div* (II/129, 1/140); *23rd Pz Div* (I/126); *24th Pz Div* (I/21, I/26); *25th Pz Div* (I/146, I/147); *26th Pz Div* (I/9); *116th Pz Div* (I/60); *Pz Instruction Div* (Regts 901, 902); *Pz Div Feldherrnhalle 2* (I/FHH).

The surrender of the Sixth Army at Stalingrad in early February 1943, followed by that of Army Group Africa in Tunisia in mid-May, decisively turned the initiative of the war against Germany. During the largely defensive campaigns that followed great efforts were made to preserve the 27 core Panzer divisions, by reinforcing mauled divisions, reforming destroyed ones, and supplementing them with some new formations – a few were upgraded elite divisions, but others 'scratch' units of limited value.

Five Panzer Divs were formed during 1943: 155, 179, 233 & 273 from reserve units in Germany, and Pz Div Norwegen from the German garrison in Norway. Four more followed in 1944: the elite Panzer Instruction (in German, *Panzer-Lehr*) and Feldherrnhalle 1 divisions, the 116th (ex-16th PzGren Div), and the scratch Pz Div Tatra. The *Panzer-Division 44* reorganization, introduced 1 August 1944, did not affect the Panzergrenadier component.

The 14th Pz Div fought on the Leningrad front until August 1944, when it joined four others (4, 5, 7 & 12) in the Courland region of southern Latvia. In Ukraine, nine Army Panzer divs (2–4, 6, 8, 9, 18–20) fought in the enormous, bloody but ultimately unsuccessful battle of Kursk in July 1943. Twelve Panzer divs (2–6, 8, 12, 16, 18-20, 25) fought in central Russia and Belarus, with four (4, 5, 12, 20) suffering heavy losses in the Red Army's destruction of Army Group Centre in Operation '*Bagration*', June–July 1944. This expelled German forces from Belarus into occupied Poland (*Generalgouvernement*), defended by five Panzer divs (16, 17, 19, 23 & 25). Three Panzer divs destroyed at Stalingrad (14, 16 & 24) were later reformed; meanwhile 14 others (2, 3, 6–9, 11–12, 17, 19, 22, 23, 25 & 27) served in southern Russia and Ukraine. From April 1944 German forces there were forced back into the Balkans, with six Panzer divs (3, 11, 13, 14, 20 & 24) fighting in Romania, and eight (1, 3, 6, 8, 13, 23, 24 & FHH) subsequently in Hungary.

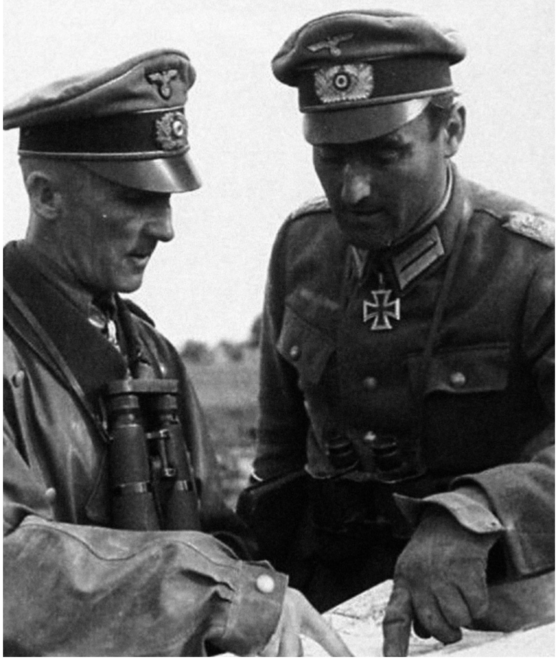
Four Panzer divs (10, 25, 17 & 21) surrendered in Tunisia in May 1943. Three (16, 24 & 26) fought in Italy from June 1943. Six (2, 11, 21, 116, Panzer Instruction & 155) fought in France following D-Day in June 1944, with one (9th) retreating into the Netherlands and two (2nd, Panzer Instruction) into Belgium, where all three joined 11th & 116 Pz Divs for the 'Battle of the Bulge' in the Ardennes, December 1944.

Panzer Divisions, 1945

On 25 March 1945, even as Allied troops were fighting their way across Germany, the Inspectorate of Panzer Troops introduced a major reorganization entitled *Panzer-Division 45,* under which all Panzer and Panzergrenadier divs would conform to a common 'mixed' order of battle. The division would comprise a Panzer Regt; first (senior, lower-numbered) and second (junior, higher-numbered) motorized PzGren Regts, supported by an Artillery Regt and other units, all retaining their previous regimental numbers.

The 1945 Panzer Regt had a Regt HQ; mobile HQ Co (Pz sigs ptn with 3x Panther tanks, and an armd PzGren ptn with 4x HMGs and 2x SdKfz

251/9 APCs); I Panzer Bn, and II Armd PzGren Bn. I Bn had an HQ Co with three ptns (sigs, mot or armd engr, and AA with 8x 3.7cm Flak 43 guns and 3x 2cm Flakvierling SP guns); 1st & 2nd Cos with PzKw IV tanks and 3rd & 4th Cos with PzKw V Panthers. II Bn had an HQ; HQ Co with four ptns (sigs, m'cycle, and two AT, each with 3x 7.5cm PaK 40 guns); 5th–7th Rifle Cos, each with 4x HMGs and 3x SdKfz 251/17 APCs; and 8th Hvy Wpns Co (6x SdKfz 251/9 APCs). This mixed armoured regiment could form a mobile battle-group supported by the SP guns of I Bn of the divisional Pz Artillery Regt, and the Pz Engr Company.

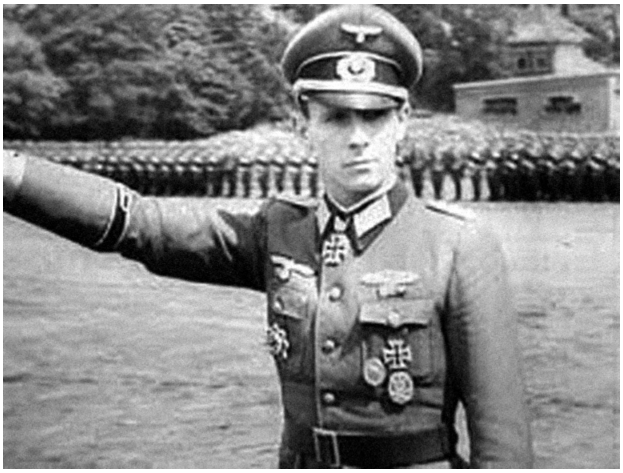


Lithuania, August 1944: *General der Panzertruppe* Hasso von Manteuffel (left), general commanding the Grossdeutschland Div from 1 February to 31 August 1944, confers with *Major* Hugo Schimmel, CO of the GD PzGren Regiment. Both wear the officers' M1934 'old style' field cap which many chose to retain throughout the war; Manteuffel has added insignia from a service cap, while Schimmel has the field cap's regulation flat-woven insignia. Manteuffel wears the popular M1934 motorcyclists' rubberized coat, with the dark green collar introduced 10 September 1935. Schimmel has an M1943 enlisted ranks' field tunic complete with M1940 mouse-grey artificial silk breast eagle. He has added his M1935 officers' collar patches and M1940 shoulder straps with the 'GD' monogram, and the right-sleeve 'Großdeutschland' cuff title is just visible. (Author's collection)

The 1945 division's two PzGren Regts each had a Regt HQ; a mobile HQ Co (Pz sigs ptn, m'cycle ptn); and I and II Motorized battalions. I Bn had an HQ Co (sigs ptn, m'cycle ptn), and a Supply Co; 1st–3rd Rifle Cos; 4th MG Co (8x HMGs and 6x 2cm FlaK 38 AA guns); 5th Hvy Wpns Co (AT ptn with 3x 7.5cm PaK 40; mtr ptn with 8x 8cm; Hvy IG ptn with 3x SdKfz 251/9 APCs). II Bn had 6th–8th Rifle Cos, 9th MG Co and 10th Hvy Wpns Co, with the same organization. Finally there was 11th IG Co (3 hvy gun and 1 mtr ptns); and 12th·Engr Co (4x HMGs and 2x 8cm mortars). These PzGren Bns were theoretically motorized, but shortages of petrol and vehicles forced them to fight on foot. Given the late date, it is doubtful whether many Panzer Divs were able to achieve this radical reorganization.

In late 1944 the Army had followed the Waffen-SS model by grouping six Panzer Divs into three operational corps, with a Corps HQ 'Fusilier' (PzGren) Regiment. The Grossdeutschland (GD) Panzer Corps was formed 28 September 1944, with GD and Brandenburg PzGren Divs and GD Corps Fusilier (March 1945; Panzer Musketeer) Regiment. The corps fought on the Oder front until May 1945. The Feldherrnhalle Panzer Corps was formed 27 November 1944, with FHH Pz (later 1st) Div and FHH PzGren Div, but FHH Panzer Corps Fusilier Regt was not formed before the corps surrendered in Austria in May 1945. The XXIV Panzer Corps, formed 27 November 1944 with 16th and 17th Pz Divs, and 79th PzFus Regt in Corps HQ, fought on the Oder front and in Silesia, and surrendered in May 1945 in Bohemia-Moravia.

Eight 'last ditch' Panzer Divs were formed in 1945: in February, 232 from Tatra Training Div; Holstein from 233 Reserve; Jüterborg; and Döberitz (a.k.a. Schlesien). March formations were Feldherrnhalle 2 from 13th Pz Div, and Müncheberg from 103rd Pz Bde and Pz Replacement Unit Krampnitz. Panzer Div Clausewitz was formed in April. All these formations were



Oberst Otto-Ernst Remer, CO of the Grossdeutschland Guard Bn in Berlin, which foiled the coup against Hitler on 20 July 1944. After this date Hitler decreed that the *Wehrmacht* should adopt the Nazi Party 'German salute', which Remer is demonstrating here at a parade. He wears the officers' M1935 service uniform; his distinctions and awards are the M1942 third-pattern 'Großdeutschland' cuff title, the Knight's Cross with Oakleaves, German Cross in Gold, Iron Cross 1st Class, Close Combat Clasp, silver Wound Badge and General Assault Badge. (Author's collection)

understrength, typically comprising a single Panzer Bn, one or two PzGren Regts, and reduced support services.

Final deployments

Fourteen Panzer Divs – numbered or named 4, 5, 7, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 25, Döberitz/Schlesien, Holstein, Jüterborg and Müncheberg – were deployed to the east German border to defend the Oder front from the Red Army. Nine of these (4, 5, 7, 20, 21, 24, Döberitz/Schlesien, Holstein & Jüterborg) surrendered or were destroyed. Müncheberg fought in Berlin in April 1945, and two Panzer Divs (12 & 14) surrendered in the Courland Pocket in May 1945. Five Panzer Divs (1, 3, 23, 25 & 232) surrendered in Austria in May 1945, and five (6, 8, 17, 19 & FHH 2) in what is now the Czech Republic.

Meanwhile, six Panzer Divs (2, 9, 11, 116, Panzer Instruction & Clausewitz) defended western Germany from the Western Allies until May 1945.

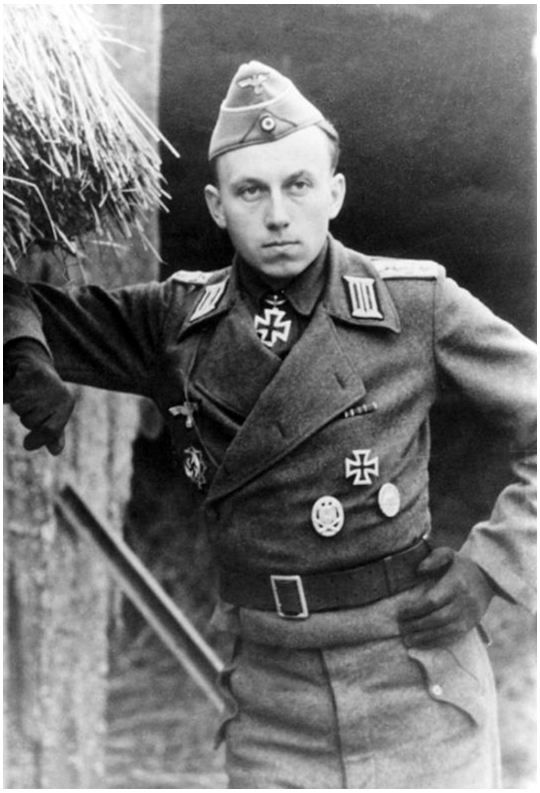
FIELD UNIFORMS

This section describes the field uniforms, insignia and equipment of Rifle and Panzergrenadier units within the Panzer Divisions. With the exception of the M1940 field-grey special field uniform, which was a version of the M1935 black Panzer uniform, these troops wore infantry uniforms, insignia and equipment with distinctive branch-colours (*Waffenfarben*). The most important uniform colour was field-grey (*feldgrau*), a greenish-grey introduced on 2 July 1929. Officers, who had their uniform items made by private tailors, preferred superior-quality cloth which often contained less green than the material of other ranks' official-issue items. Pre- and early war uniforms had facings (cap bands, collars, shoulder straps) in a dark blueish-green shade; this is called simply 'dark green' in this text. 'All ranks' means all personnel, 'other' or 'enlisted ranks' the NCOs and men.

Note that the pattern dates in Osprey's house style, e.g. 'M1940', are merely descriptive and not German wartime designations, and the identification of items is normally by a generic English term rather than an exact translation from the German.

National Socialist symbols

On 30 January 1933 Adolf Hitler became Germany's national 'Leader' (*Führer*), and the *Reichsheer* uniform was 'Nazified'. On 14 March 1933 a black (outer)-white-red cockade replaced the unpopular *Reichswehr* cockade on peaked and field caps. On 17 February 1934 a shield-shaped transfer (decal) in diagonal stripes of the pre-1918 national colours black-white-red was added to the right side of the steel helmet, and another with a silver-white eagle, with folded wings, holding a swastika – the 'Wehrmacht Eagle' – on a black shield on the left. A hand-embroidered, machine-embroidered, woven, or stamped metal eagle with outstretched wings, holding a wreathed swastika – the 'Army Eagle' – was added to peaked and field caps, and on the right breast of the tunic just above the pocket. On 1 June 1935 *Wehrmacht* replaced the term *Reichswehr* to designate the Armed Forces, and *Reichsheer* became simply *Heer* for the Army.



A highly decorated young Panzergrenadier officer poses casually for a photograph, 1942. He wears the M1938 officers' field cap with silver crown and 'scallop' piping, and the meadow-green branch-colour chevron abolished in July 1942. The 'crossover' jacket of his M1940 field-grey special field uniform has M1935 officers' collar patches and M1940 field shoulder straps. He displays the Knight's Cross, the German Cross in Silver on his right breast, and on the left the Iron Cross 1st Class, General Assault Badge and a silver Wound Badge. (Author's collection)

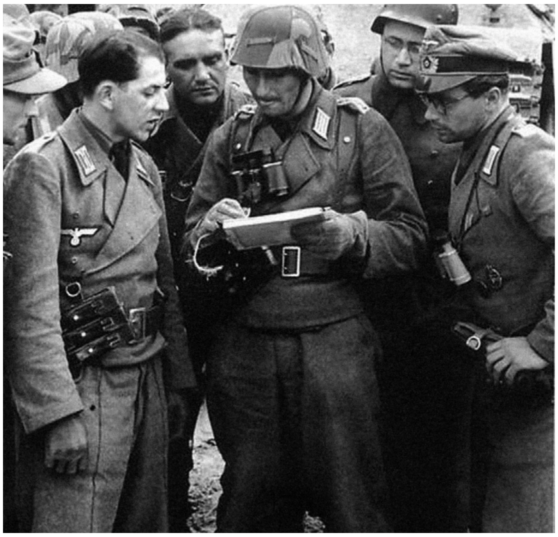
Headgear

The **M1918 steel helmet** with projecting ventilator 'horns', introduced 15 July 1918, was painted matt grey, with the M1934 shield transfers on the sides. The more compact **M1935 steel helmet**, introduced 25 June 1935, with crimped-under edges and rivet ventilators, was painted matt grey. A new blackened leather chinstrap was introduced 22 November 1935. From 27 January 1940 the helmet was painted matt field-grey (greenish-grey); from 21 March the tricolour national shield was removed from the right side, and the helmet was repainted matt slate-grey (a darker shade than matt grey). The **M1940 steel helmet** had stamped instead of rivet ventilator holes. The **M1942 steel helmet**, introduced 20 April 1942, had out-turned uncrimped edges. The M1934 Wehrmacht Eagle shield was ordered removed from the left side from 28 August 1943. Helmets were camouflaged at need, with mud, paint, white or camouflage cloth covers, and/or with rubber bands, breadbag straps, or string or wire netting to hold foliage.

The **M1935 peaked service cap**, introduced 10 September 1935, was worn in service and walking-out uniform; officers often adopted a 'saddle' shape and wore them in the field, and NCOs also wore them to emphasize their authority. The field-grey cap had a black-lacquered vulcanized fibre peak, a dark green cap band, and branch-colour piping around the crown seam and top and bottom edges of the band. A stamped bright aluminium M1934 Army Eagle was worn above an M1934 stamped national cockade centred in a stamped nickel-silver ('new silver') M1933 wreath with a gap between the top leaves, introduced 14 March 1933; a totally enclosed nickel-silver wreath, 15 March 1935; or, from 7 November 1935, one in bright aluminium-coloured light metal. Other ranks wore a black patent-leather chinstrap, officers aluminium-wire doubled chin-cords, and often an aluminium-wire woven cockade and wreath, occasionally with a matching eagle. General officers wore gold wire chin-cords and piping, and from 16 November 1942 a gilded light metal eagle and wreath.

The first-pattern **M1934 officers' 'old style' field cap,** introduced 24 March 1934, resembled a smaller peaked service cap but with a field-grey band, no crown stiffening, a soft black leather peak, no chin-cords, and the

An *Oberleutnant* company commander confers with his *Leutnante* platoon commanders, all wearing the M1940 field-grey special field uniform with M1935 collar patches, and all carrying MP40 magazine pouches. The *Oberleutnant* wears a 'splinter'-pattern helmet cover, and the *Leutnant* at right the M1934 officers' field cap. (Author's collection)



service cap's cockade and wreath. The M1935 second-pattern cap added a silver embroidered Army Eagle on a dark green backing, and a dark green cloth band with a bright aluminium thread cockade and wreath. It would be abolished officially on 1 April 1942, but in fact was worn unofficially until 1945.

The **M1938 officers' 'new pattern' field cap,** introduced 6 December 1938, was of peakless 'sidecap' shape, with a flap scalloped at the front. Insignia were an M1935 silver embroidered Army Eagle on a dark green backing, above a branch-colour braid chevron point up, above an embroidered cockade on a dark green diamond, and 3mm aluminium cord piping around the crown and scalloped front. The chevron was abolished 10 July 1942. General officers wore gold piping and chevron from 24 October 1939, and a gold thread Army Eagle from 17 November 1942.

The **M1935 other ranks' field cap,** introduced 10 September 1935, was the model for the M1938 officers' version. It had no flap or crown piping; a white cotton woven Army Eagle on a dark green backing (from 19 June 1937), above a branch-colour chevron (abolished 10 July 1942) and woven cockade. The eagle changed to silver-grey embroidery 5 February 1939, and mouse-grey thread on a field-grey backing from 1 June 1940.

C

NORTH AFRICA, 1941–43

(1) *Waffenunterfeldwebel*, 101st Rifle Regt; Tobruk, June 1942

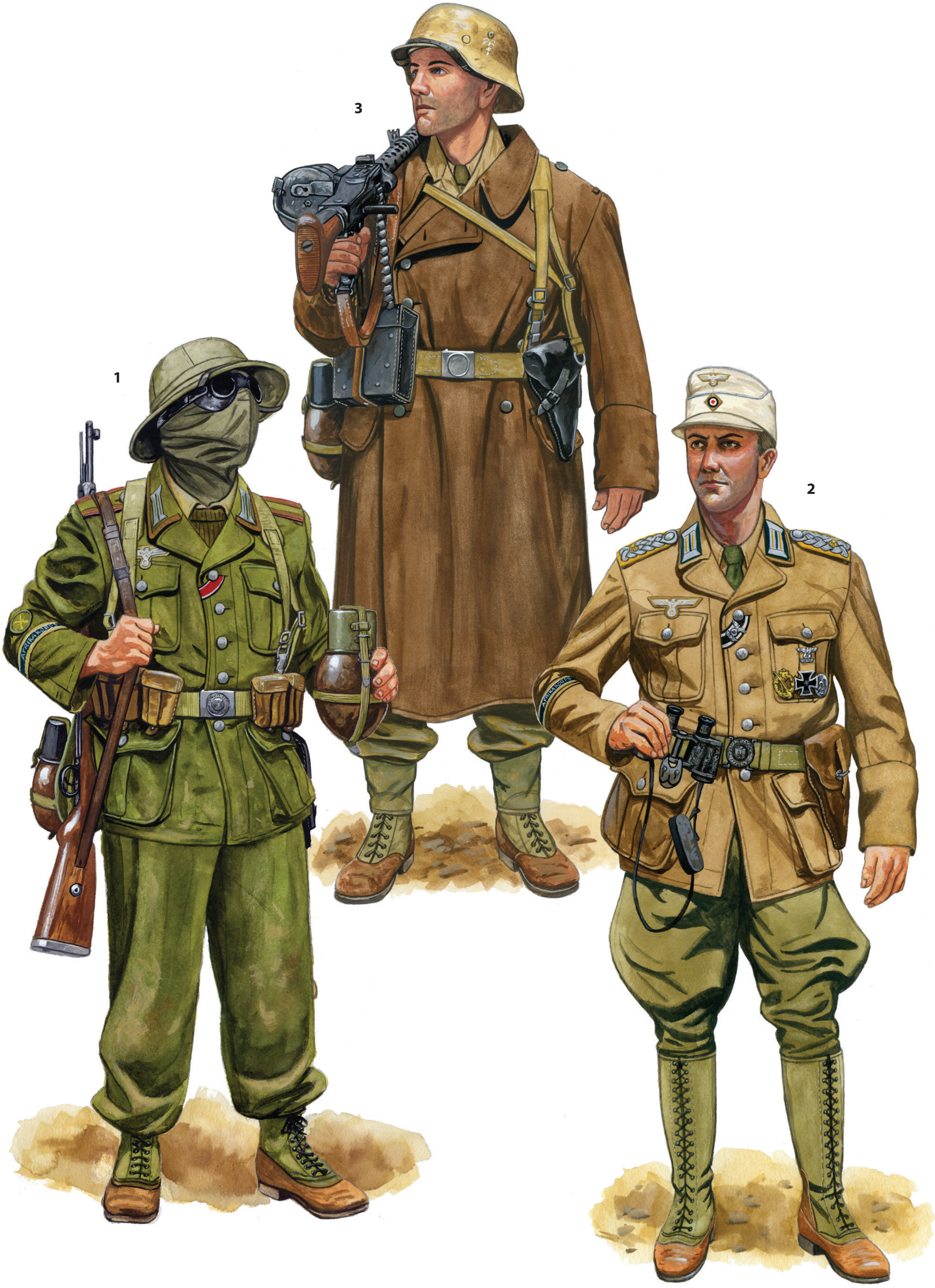
This 15th Pz Div armourer NCO's specialty is identified by the tropical version of the crossed rifles badge, with silver edging for confirmation in post, worn on his right forearm above the M1941 'Deutsches Afrikakorps' cuff title. He wears the M1940 tropical uniform with M1940 pith helmet and first-pattern ankle-boots, and Zeiss-Umbral sun-goggles. His tunic has M1940 tropical silver-grey collar braids, copper-brown braid NCO collar and shoulder-strap edging, and meadow-green shoulder-strap piping. His greenish-brown webbing waistbelt supports brown leather rifle ammunition pouches, and on the left hip a webbing frog for his bayonet, and an M1934 entrenching tool. Matching infantry supporting straps secure on his back an M1939 A-frame for two M1940 tropical water bottles and the M1931 breadbag and messtin. He carries a Mauser Kar98k rifle.

(2) *Oberstleutnant*, 200th Panzergrenadier Regt; El Alamein, November 1942

This battalion commander in 90th Light Africa Div wears the M1940 officers' tropical uniform. His very sun-bleached field cap has officers' aluminium wire crown and frontal piping, but standard enlisted ranks' insignia in blue-grey on brown backing – as also on his right breast. His collar patches and shoulder straps should show meadow-green *Waffenfarbe* for this unit, but as a veteran Cavalry Rifles officer he retains yellow. He too wears the M1941 cuff title, and displays the 1914 Iron Cross 1st and 2nd Class with 1939 'bars', the M1940 Motorized Infantry Assault Badge, and a silver Wound Badge. He wears tropical riding breeches with canvas high boots, and the rarely seen M1940 officers' tropical waistbelt.

(3) *Bewährungsschütze*, 962nd Africa Rifle Regt; Tunis, May 1943

This 'private on probation' in a 999th Africa Div penal regiment is trusted as first gunner of an MG34 section light machine gun, but is forbidden to wear insignia. Note that even his belt buckle lacks the Wehrmacht Eagle, though his sand-painted M1942 helmet bears a strictly unofficial palm-and-swastika Africa Corps badge. He wears the M1940 chocolate-brown greatcoat without shoulder straps, over long trousers, M1940 greenish-brown canvas anklets, and tropical ankle-boots. His tropical belt and supporting straps carry an MG spares pouch, a P08 pistol, and a second M1931 water bottle.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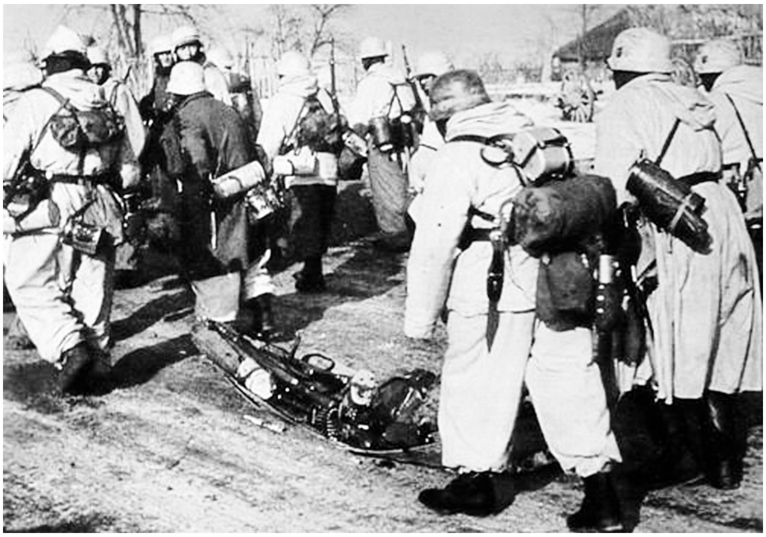


A section from the 20th PzGren Div on the march near Smolensk, winter 1943/44; note the machine gun and other equipment dragged on the sledge. Most wear helmets painted white (with M1934 Wehrmacht eagle badge retained), and M1942 reversible, padded winter uniforms or (at right) hooded white cotton surcoats over their greatcoats. The soldier in the foreground wears an A-frame webbing battle pack on M1939 supporting straps, with his M1931 messtin above a rolled M1931 shelter quarter. On his belt are his bayonet, M1931 breadbag and M1931 water bottle. (Author's collection)

The **M1942 other ranks' field cap**, introduced 21 July 1942, had a flap secured by two field-grey front buttons which could be folded down to protect the ears and chin. An M1942 mouse-grey woven Army Eagle and woven cockade on a field-grey T-shape backing was worn above the buttons. Officers sometimes wore this cap but with gold or silver aluminium-cord crown piping.

The **M1943 standard or 'universal' field cap**, issued to all ranks and branches, was the M1942 cap with an added long field-grey cloth peak, grey flap-buttons, and M1942 cap badges. Officers wore bright embroidered aluminium insignia on dark green backing, aluminium crown piping and front buttons, and generals' ranks had gold distinctions.

TUNICS & LEGWEAR

The field-grey **M1928 officers' service coat**, introduced 31 October 1928, had six matt silver pebbled front buttons; branch-colour front piping; deep turnback cuffs; external box-pleated breast pockets with buttoned, scalloped flaps; internal waist pockets with buttoned, scalloped flaps; and two buttons in the small of the lower back. From 17 November 1932 the dark field-grey collar (from 10 September 1935, dark green) bore double matt silver embroidered braid bars (*Litzen*, the traditional distinction of Guards units) with a dark field-grey separation bar, each braid with a branch-colour centre-piping. General officers wore gold *Larisch* embroidery on long red collar-patches introduced 22 July 1927. From 1934 the M1934 matt aluminium thread (general officers, gold) breast eagle was worn on field-grey (10 September 1935, dark green) backing. This coat was abolished for officers below *Generalmajor* rank on 31 March 1942. Shin-length medium grey ('stone-grey') **M1920 'boot-breeches'** (riding breeches without leather reinforcements) were introduced 20 December 1920, with general officers adding bright red seam-piping between two 4cm red side-stripes.

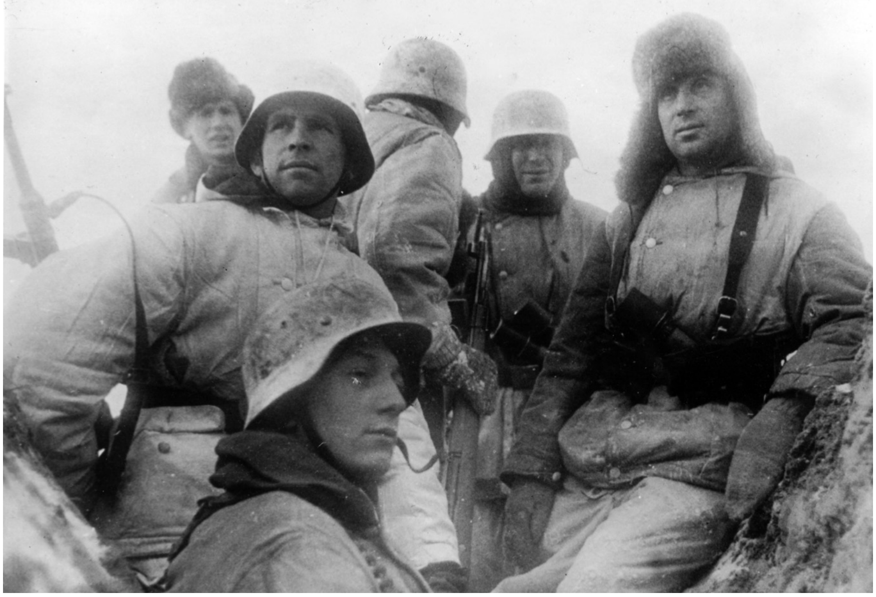
The **M1933 officers' field tunic**, introduced 5 May 1933, had matt field-grey or aluminium pebbled buttons, and a shallower dark field-grey (10 September 1935, dark green) collar with M1932 officer braids on dark field-grey collar patches. The **M1935 officers' field tunic**, introduced 10 September 1935, had M1935 braids on dark green collar patches; rank insignia on shoulder straps; five front buttons; deep turn-back cuffs; external pleated breast and side pockets with buttoned, scalloped flaps; and a silver hand-embroidered M1935 breast eagle on a dark green (4 June 1940, field-grey) backing. It was worn with M1920 boot-breeches in stone-grey, or **M1940 boot-breeches** in field-grey. From 31 October 1939 officers were required to wear other ranks' field tunics when on operations, but most officers added the dark green collar, M1935 officers' collar patches and an officers' breast eagle.

The field-grey **M1933 other ranks' field tunic**, introduced 1 April 1933, had matt field-grey or aluminium pebbled buttons; a shallow field-grey collar, with M1933 double field-grey braids with a darker greyish-green separation bar and branch-colour centre-pipings, on field-grey collar-patches; rank insignia on field-grey M1933 pointed shoulder straps; five front buttons; plain cuffs; external pleated breast and side pockets with buttoned, scalloped flaps; and an M1934 white cotton woven breast eagle on a light field-grey backing (introduced 17 February 1934). It was worn with stone-grey **M1920 long trousers**.

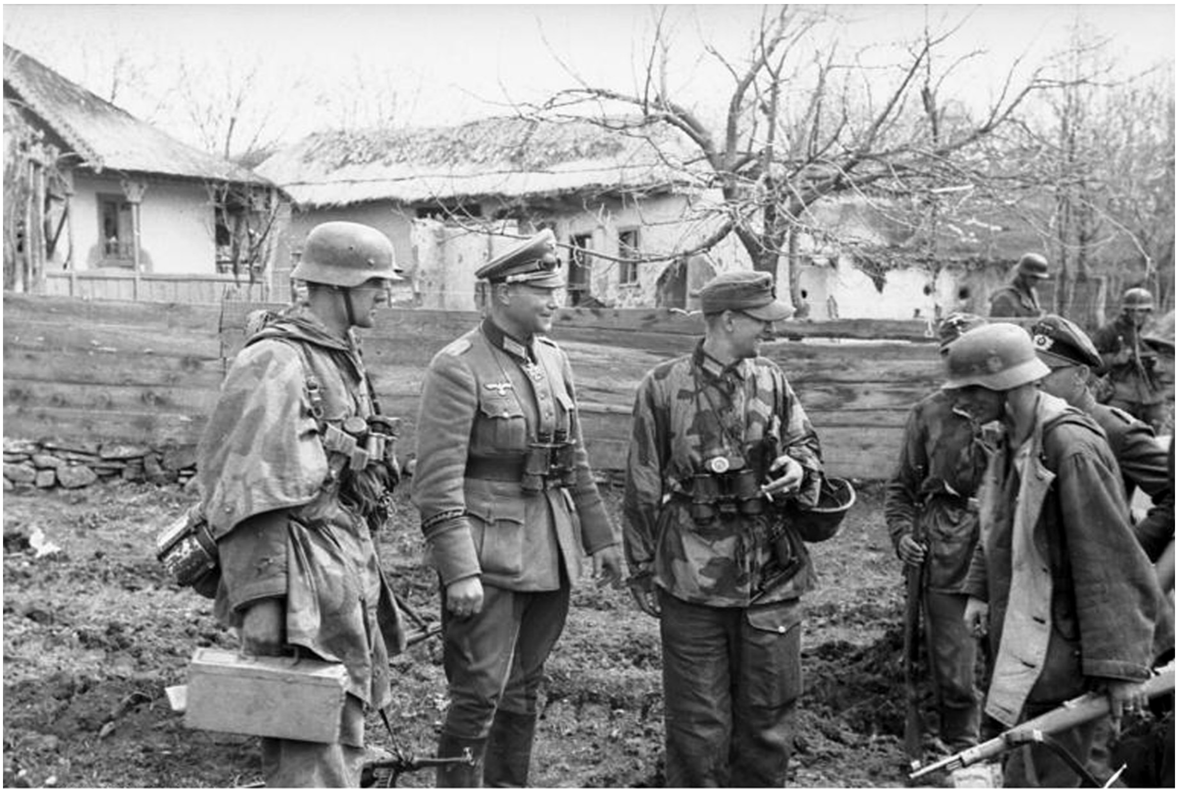
The **M1934 other ranks' field tunic**, introduced 10 December 1934, had a dark field-grey collar and collar patches; dark field-grey pointed shoulder straps; and two sets of three eyelets around the waist for the hooks of the internal belt-supporting straps. The **M1935 other ranks' field tunic**, introduced 10 September 1935, had pointed dark green shoulder straps, a dark green collar, and (26 November 1935) dark green M1935 collar patches with silver-grey braids, a dark green separation bar and branch-colour centre-pipings; the M1935 breast eagle was woven in white cotton on a dark green backing. The **M1936 other ranks' field tunic**, introduced 15 December 1936, had a thicker lining, and an M1937 silver-grey woven breast eagle on a dark-green backing was introduced 19 June 1937. Round-ended dark green shoulder straps edged with branch-colour piping were introduced 26 November 1938, as were M1938 'standard braid' dark green collar patches with double silver-grey braids and a dark green separation bar and centre-pipings. Branch-colour identification had now transferred from the collar to the shoulder straps.

Skilled military tailors and resourceful quartermasters modified **foreign uniforms** for wear in the German Army. The Netherlands Army's M1934 greenish-grey uniform only required new insignia; the Austrian Army's M1933 greenish-grey uniform acquired a new collar; and Czechoslovak khaki M1930 uniforms were dyed field-grey.

The **M1940 other ranks' field tunic**, introduced 9 May 1940, had a field-grey collar with M1940 silver-grey collar braids with a 'mouse-grey' (light



Six Panzergrenadiers, wearing the padded, reversible M1942 *Winteranzug,* await a Soviet counterattack near Vitebsk, Belarus, on 23 March 1944. The soldier at the right has acquired a Red Army M1931 'Finnish' fleece-lined cap, with the red star badge removed. (Nik Cornish at www.Stavka.org.uk)



Oberst Karl Lorenz (second from left), who commanded the Grossdeutschland PzGren Regt from 14 May 1943 to 1 August 1944, photographed near Kirovhrad, Ukraine, in January 1944. *Oberleutnant* Wentzke (third from left), commanding the regiment's 16th (Infantry Gun) Co, wears an M1942 first-pattern camouflage smock in a very pronounced 'splinter' pattern; the large left thigh pocket seems to identify the trousers of the M1941 reed-green special field uniform. The soldier at the left wears his *Zeltbahn* shelter quarter (which appears to be in softer 'marsh' pattern) arranged as a poncho over a camouflage smock or reversible jacket. At far right is an example of the reversible M1942 grey/white winter uniform worn grey-side out. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-711-0428-28A /Theodor Scheerer / CC-BY-SA 3.0)

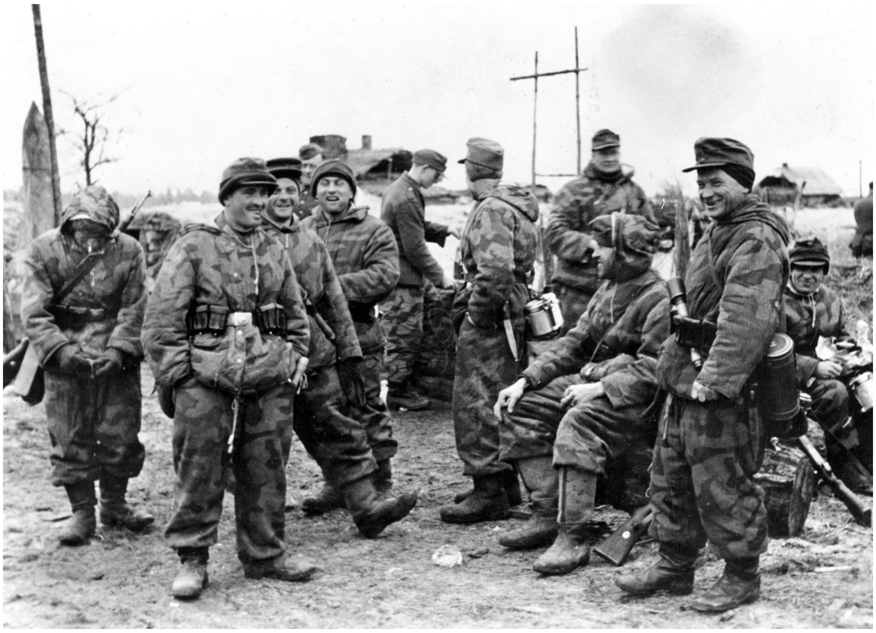
grey) separation bar and centre-pipings, sewn directly to the collar to avoid the need to make separate collar patches. The M1940 rounded shoulder straps were now field-grey. The M1935 NCOs' aluminium braid *Tresse* edging on the shoulder straps and collar, introduced 10 September 1935, was replaced 25 April 1940 with M1940 'subdued' mouse-grey woven braid. The M1940 mouse-grey breast eagle on a field-grey backing was introduced 4 June 1940. The tunic was worn with **M1940 field-grey long trousers.** The **M1941 other ranks' field tunic**, introduced 26 May 1941, had six front buttons to compensate for the deteriorating quality of the tunic and lining. The **M1942 other ranks' field tunic**, probably introduced in summer 1942, economized by discarding the pleats from the four pockets. The **M1943 other ranks' field tunic** had square-cut pocket flaps.

Many troops advancing into the Soviet Union in the sweltering heat of June–August 1941 adopted the **M1940 reed-green drill fatigue uniform**, introduced 12 February 1940 as a summer field uniform, in lightweight greyish-green herringbone cloth. The jacket had five field-grey buttons, a turnover collar, plain cuffs, and two external waist pockets without flaps. Although no insignia were prescribed, officers often wore M1935 shoulder straps and M1935 or M1940 breast eagles; NCOs, M1940 shoulder straps, collar braid and breast eagles; and men, left-sleeve chevrons and the same breast eagle. The jacket was worn with M1940 reed-green drill long trousers. The **M1942 summer field uniform**, introduced early that year, was the M1942 field tunic produced in reed-green drill cloth.

The **M1940 field-grey special field uniform** was a field-grey version of the M1935 black Panzer uniform for tank crews, issued from 29 May 1940 to other armoured units such as self-propelled assault guns. On 5 March 1943 the SP anti-tank and infantry gun companies in PzGren Regts were authorized this uniform, and it proved so popular that many members of armoured PzGren and other PzGren divisional units acquired it unofficially. The field-grey 'crossover' double-breasted, waist-length jacket had a wide collar and lapels, with M1940 collar braids on field-grey collar patches edge-piped in branch colours (officers, M1935 officers' collar patches); round-ended field-grey shoulder straps; plain cuffs; a fly front on the right side closed by four large hidden black horn buttons and three smaller buttons; and an M1940 machine-woven (officers, M1940 silver hand-embroidered) breast eagle. It was worn with M1940 field-grey long trousers, or later field-grey **M1943 self-supporting trousers** with belt loops and tapered ankles closed with drawstrings (modelled on the mountain troops' *Berghose*), introduced 28 June 1943.

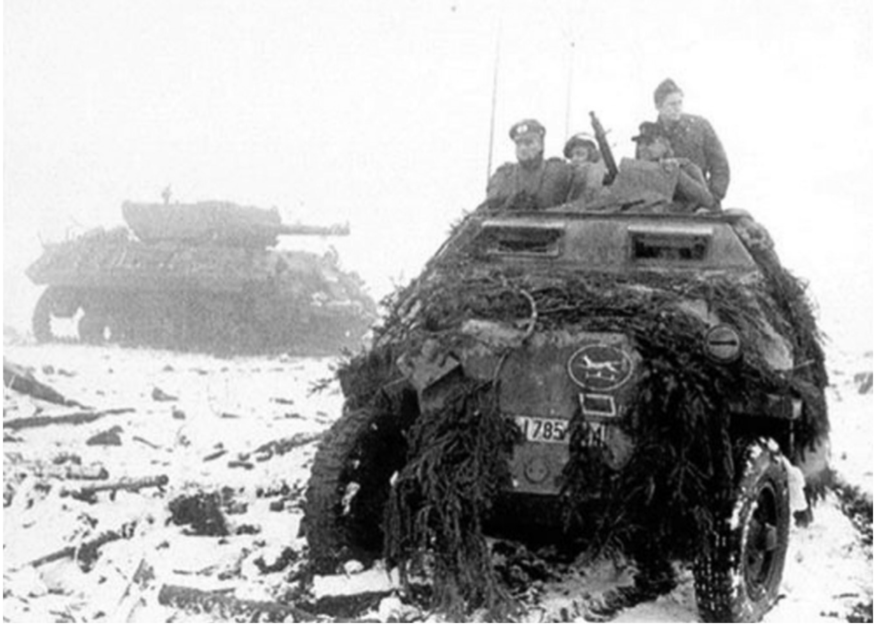
The **M1941 protective jacket** in greenish-brown, mouse-grey, or reed-green lightweight herringbone drill was modelled on the 1940 special field uniform jacket but with a large internal left-breast pocket. It was intended as a protective or summer jacket for armoured vehicle crews, but was also worn by Panzergrenadiers. The **M1942 protective jacket**, probably introduced 22 August 1942, had a large external breast pocket with a buttoned, pointed flap, no shoulder straps or collar patches, and (officially) M1942 rank insignia on the left upper sleeve; many soldiers wore it with shoulder straps and collar patches. The matching trousers had a large external left thigh pocket.

The standard **M1944 field tunic** was made in poor-quality cloth of a greenish-brown shade designated *feldgrau 44*. Introduced 25 September 1944, it comprised a waist-length 'battledress-type' blouse with grey buttons, a flat turnover collar with M1940 collar braids (officers, M1935 patches); round-ended shoulder-straps; plain cuffs; two unpleated external breast pockets with squared, buttoned flaps; and a deep waistband. The M1944 mouse-grey woven breast eagle was worked on a field-grey triangular backing, but officers usually preferred their M1935 or M1940 eagles. It was worn with greenish-brown M1944 trousers with integral waistbelt;



February 1944: a cheerful section of Panzergrenadiers relaxing, affording a good view of the M1942 padded, reversible *Winteranzug* worn camouflage-side out. They wear M1943 field caps with tubular 'toques' underneath or rolled on top, and short-shaft marching boots or (second from right) felt-shafted winter boots. The hooded jackets and overtrousers appear to be in a mixture of sharp 'splinter' pattern and the softer 'marsh' pattern that appeared during 1943. They are carrying minimal rifle equipment, and are armed with Kar98k rifles and M1924 stick grenades. (Nik Cornish at www.Stavka.org.uk)

An SdKfz 251 APC from I (Armd) Bn/ 60th PzGren Regt, 116th Pz Div advances through the American lines during the 'Battle of the Bulge', December 1944. Despite the branches added for camouflage, the division's famous *Windhund* vehicle (and cap) badge is clearly visible on the front plate, above the battalion's tactical symbol. The badge celebrated 'Sascha', a Russian greyhound adopted in southern Russia by the 116th's predecessor 16th Motorized Infantry Division. (Author's collection)



two internal front pockets and two smaller internal back pockets, all with square, buttoned flaps. This uniform was also produced in reed-green drill as the **M1944 summer field uniform**, but deteriorating supply-lines, shortage of raw materials, and the German soldier's conservatism ensured that the M1944 uniforms saw limited use.

Overclothing

The standard double-breasted field-grey **M1920 greatcoat**, introduced 22 December 1920, had a wide plain field-grey collar; shoulder straps; two rows of six matt-grey buttons; a rear half-belt with two buttons and a buttonable rear vent; deep turnback cuffs; and internal waist pockets with diagonal buttonless flaps. The **M1935 greatcoat**, introduced 10 September 1935, had a dark green collar, the **M1940 greatcoat** a field-grey collar, and the **M1942 greatcoat** a markedly wider field-grey collar. From 22 July 1927 general officers had gold buttons and bright red lapel lining.

Drivers of open vehicles wore the **M1934 surcoat**, introduced 12 November 1934 in field-grey water-resistant cloth. This longer and roomier version of the greatcoat, with a field-grey (10 September 1935, dark-green; 1940, field-grey) collar, was worn over the greatcoat and field equipment.

Winter and camouflage clothing

Troops confronted in 1941–42 by a cruel Russian winter which they were not equipped to encounter were issued stop-gap winter clothing: balaclavas, thick woollen underwear, sweaters, mittens, water-resistant watchcoats and surcoats, and miscellaneous civilian donations.

The **M1942 winter uniform**, in padded material reversible from white to grey, was introduced 19 April 1942. It comprised a thigh-length six-button hooded jacket with two flapless internal waist pockets; the only insignia allowed were buttoned-on coloured upper-sleeve armlets, the colours to be changed daily as field signs. It was worn with overtrousers of the same material, and unpopular M1942 white-lined snow boots, which were often discarded. The **M1943 anorak uniform,** also reversible between white and grey, was introduced in late 1942, and it too had sleeve buttons for armlets. It comprised a thigh-length, hooded, pull-over anorak, with a drawstring waist and buckled wrist straps; across the chest were three contiguous external pockets, and behind the hips two more, all with individual buttoned flaps. The matching overtrousers had drawstrings at the leg ends.

The **M1942/43 winter camouflage uniform** was manufactured initially in padded cloth reversible between unbleached white and hard-edged 'splinter'-pattern camouflage as on the M1931 *Zeltbahn* shelter-quarter, and later in a softer-edged 'marsh' pattern (both with a *Strich* or 'rain' element overprinted on the brown and green patches and the pale tan or drab green ground). The hooded thigh-length jacket had a storm flap down the front with five pebbled buttons, hood and waist drawstrings, buttoned cuff tabs, and large side pockets with square or diagonal buttoned flaps. The early model used stiff duck cloth, the slightly differing later model a lighter rayon shell. The reversible padded overtrousers in the same materials were not always available.

The lightweight **M1942 camouflage 'shirt'** (**smock**) was a loose, collarless, pullover garment in linen herringbone twill, reversible between unbleached white and 'splinter'-pattern camouflage. It was secured down the chest by a cord crossing through five pairs of laceholes; it had a waist drawstring, long vertical side vents giving access to the tunic pockets, and buttoned cuff tabs. The **M1943** second version was hooded, and usually camouflaged in 'marsh' pattern (with softer-edged brown and green patches on the tan or pale grey-green ground colour). The 'marsh' pattern on the **M1944** production smock had become even more blurred. All smocks were issued together with a matching **helmet cover** secured under the rim with a simple drawstring.

Camouflage material proved so popular that some troops, especially officers, had M1943 field tunics and M1940 trousers, M1944 field tunics and trousers, and M1940 field-grey special field uniform jackets made up in 'splinter'- or 'marsh'-pattern herringbone twill, and officers might add shoulder straps and other insignia.

Footwear

Footwear was manufactured in blackened leather. The **M1933 'buckle-boots'** introduced 1 April 1933, comprising ankle-boots with an integral shaft secured by three buckles, proved unpopular and were withdrawn in 1935. Officers returned to the black **M1919 officers' riding boots** with a 43–51cm shaft. Other ranks wore the **M1927 marching boots**, the traditional 'dice shakers', with a 35–39mm 'long shaft', introduced 21 February 1927 to accommodate ankle-length trousers. These were replaced from 9 November 1939 with the **M1939 marching boots** with a 31–35mm 'short shaft', to economize on leather.

M1934 lace-up ankle-boots, introduced 6 February 1934, were worn with the M1940 field-grey special field uniform, and increasingly with other uniforms from 1943. In conjunction with these, **M1940 gaiters**, inspired by the British Army's web anklets, were made of field-grey or brownish-grey canvas and fastened with two narrow brown leather buckled straps. Though introduced on 8 August 1940, in 1943 they were nicknamed 'retreat gaiters'. They were worn from August 1940 with M1940 field-grey trousers; from 5 June 1944 with M1943 field-grey trousers; and from 25 September 1944 with M1944 brownish-green trousers.

INSIGNIA[2]

Ranks and field rank insignia

The lowest two ranks varied according to the branch of service: *Oberschütze/Schütze* (Rifles, from 12 September 1935); *Panzerobergrenadier/Panzergrenadier* (Panzergrenadiers, from 5 July 1942); *Panzeroberfüsilier/Panzerfüsilier* (79th Panzer Fusilier Regt, from December 1944).

A general officer (*General*) wore plaited shoulder straps, introduced 19 September 1935: two 4mm bright gold wire cords (15 July 1938, golden-yellow 'celleon' material) separated by a 4mm bright silver cord, on bright red underlay, and 1-0x 3.8mm nickel-silver four-pointed stars for *Generalleutnant* and *Generalmajor* (the most senior ranks within divisions).

A field officer (*Stabsoffizier*) wore M1935 plaited shoulder straps made of two 5mm matt aluminium braids (1940, light grey), on branch-colour cloth underlay, with 2-0 gilded brass stars (7 November 1935, brassed light metal; wartime, gold galvanized or lacquered aluminium) for *Oberst*, *Oberstleutnant* and *Major.*

A subaltern officer (*Hauptmann*, *Oberleutnant*, *Leutnant*) wore M1935 shoulder straps made of 2x 4mm doubled, flat, matt aluminium braids laid concentrically (1940, light grey), on branch-colour cloth underlay appearing as edging, with 2-0 stars.

Other ranks wore six types of shoulder straps:

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[2] To avoid duplication here, note that the present author's series of Men-at-Arms titles on *The German Army 1939–45 (1)–(5)*, Nos. 311, 316, 326, 330 & 336, each include tables of representative branch and unit insignia relevant to different fronts at different dates. MAA 311 *The German Army 1939–45 (1): Blitzkrieg* also has an illustrated chart of rank insignia; MAA 316, ...*(2): North Africa & Balkans* has charts of officer candidates' insignia, and of trade badges; and MAA 330, ...*(4) Eastern Front 1943–45* has a chart of the M1942 sleeve rank insignia used with protective, camouflage and working garments. MAA 365 *World War II German Army Battle Insignia* covers in depth the various 'assault' and 'battle' badges, 'destruction' badges and close-combat clasps, wound badges, the sniper's badge, campaign cuffbands and armshields. MAA 380 *German Army Elite Units 1939–45* illustrates the special insignia of, among others, the Grossdeutschland, Feldherrnhalle, Brandenburg, 130th Panzer Instruction, 21st, 24th and 116th Panzer Divisions.

D

EASTERN FRONT, 1941–43

(1) *Leutnant*, 76th Motorized Infantry Regt; Moscow, December 1941

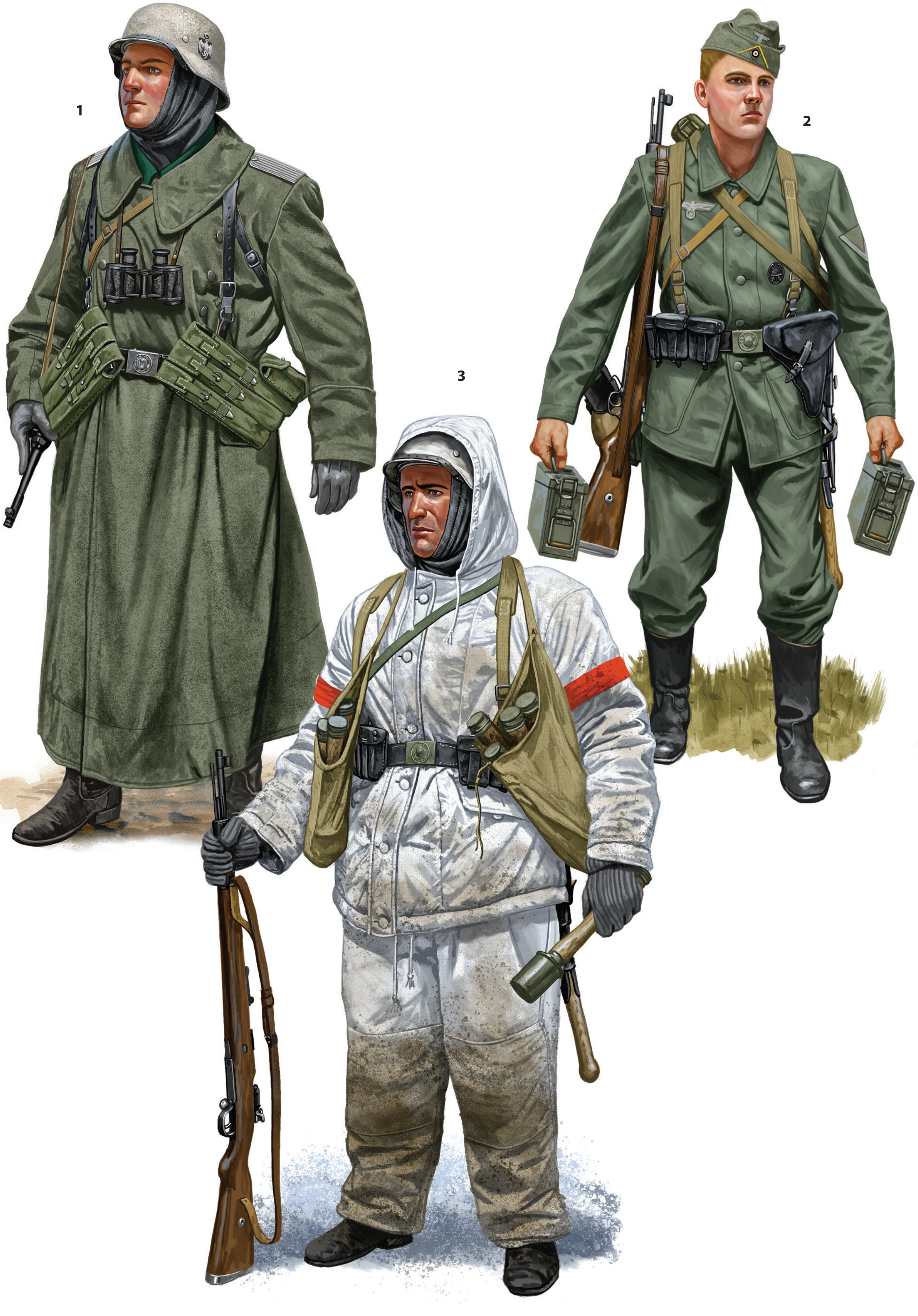
Against the intense cold this officer from 20th Mot Inf Div wears a 'toque' (tubular scarf/balaclava) under his white-painted M1935 helmet, and an M1940 surcoat (watchcoat) over his M1935 greatcoat, from which he has transferred his shoulder straps. He carries platoon commander's equipment; visible are an enlisted ranks' belt and supporting straps with magazine pouches for his MP40, and 6x30 'small binoculars'. He would also carry an entrenching tool, and perhaps a bayonet; a breadbag, messtin and water bottle; and a gasmask canister slung on his lower back.

(2) *Gefreiter*, 26th Panzergrenadier Regt; Voronezh, Southern Russia, July 1942

This second gunner in an LMG team from 24th Pz Div wears an M1935 field cap with M1940 insignia and the Cavalry golden-yellow *Waffenfarbe* chevron. His summer field uniform is the two-pocket reed-green fatigue tunic and matching trousers, with M1939 'short-shaft' marching boots. His rank chevron is in mouse-grey braid on a field-grey triangle; he has unofficially added a mouse-grey breast eagle, and displays a black Wound Badge. He is armed with a Kar98k rifle and P08 pistol; the canvas supporting straps secure an A-frame combat pack for field equipment on his back. He carries two M1940 ammunition boxes, and a slung container with two spare barrels for the section's MG42.

(3) *Panzergrenadier*, 64th Panzergrenadier Regt; Stalingrad, December 1942

This infantryman from 16th Pz Div wears the M1942 padded winter uniform reversible from grey to white. The jacket has button-on recognition bands in the colour of the day, and the trousers are worn over M1939 'short-shaft' marching boots. In addition to standard rifleman's equipment he carries field-made assault engineers' grenade sacks with numbers of M1924 stick grenades.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M1933 (introduced 1 April 1933): field-grey pointed strap, no piping.
M1934 (10 December 1934): dark field-grey pointed strap, no piping.
M1935 (10 September 1935): dark green pointed strap, no piping. Reintroduced 18 March 1939.
M1938 (26 November 1938): dark green rounded strap, branch-colour piping.
M1940 (9 May 1940): field-grey rounded strap, branch-colour piping.
M1944 (25 September 1944): greenish-brown rounded strap, branch-colour piping.

A senior non-commissioned officer (*Unteroffizier mit Portepee*) wore all around the shoulder strap and the front and bottom edges of the collar 1cm matt or bright aluminium embroidered braid (*Tresse*), introduced 22 December 1920. 9mm bright aluminium embroidered braid was introduced 10 September 1935, and changed to 9mm mouse-grey artificial silk 25 April 1940. 2-1 (14 September 1938, 3-1) bright aluminium stars (1940, grey aluminium-and-zinc alloy) were worn on the shoulder straps to identify the ranks of *Stabsfeldwebel*, *Oberfeldwebel* and *Feldwebel*.

A junior NCO (*Unteroffizier ohne Portepee*) wore collar braid, and braid all around the shoulder strap (*Unterfeldwebel*), or omitting it across the outer end of the strap (*Unteroffizier*).

Men (*Mannschaften*) wore plain shoulder straps, but point-down chevrons in NCO braid on the left upper sleeve: 3-0 matt or bright aluminium M1920 chevrons on field-grey triangular backing (1 October 1935, dark green) for *Obergefreiter*, *Gefreiter*, *Oberschütze* and *Schütze*. A higher rank, *Stabsgefreiter* (light grey cotton star above two chevrons), was introduced 16 November 1927, but abolished along with *Oberschütze* on 1 October 1934. The insignia introduced 1 October 1936 were bright aluminium on dark green backing: star and chevron, 2-1 chevrons, and 1-0 stars for *Oberfreiter mit mehr als 6 Dienstjahren*, *Oberfreiter mit weniger als 6 Dienstjahren*, *Gefreiter*, *Oberschütze* and *Schütze*. M1940 chevrons were in mouse-grey artificial silk on field-grey backing. Chevrons on reed-green drill garments were white (later, mouse-grey) with two narrow black inner borders.

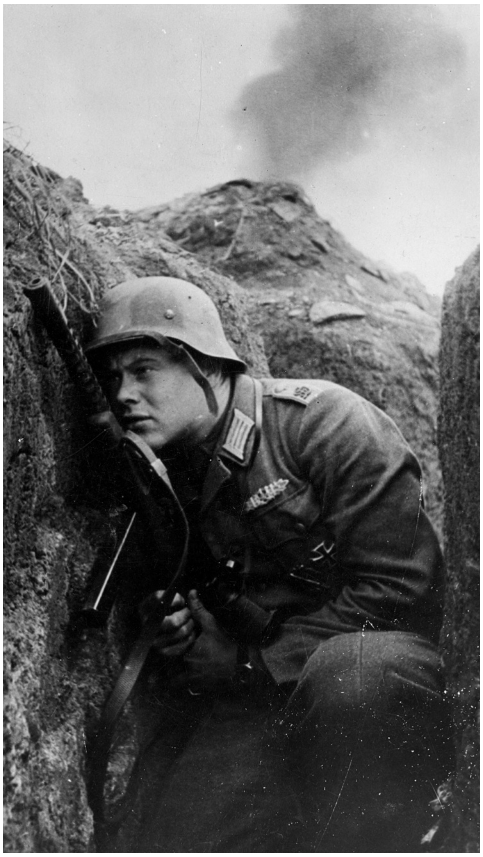
The senior NCO of a company, responsible for discipline, was given the appointment of *Oberfeldwebel der Truppe* on 29 June 1932 (equivalent to a British Company Sergeant Major), and wore two NCO braid rings (nicknamed *Kolbenringe* – 'piston rings') around the cuffs of the field tunic and greatcoat. The title was changed to *Hauptfeldwebel* on 28 September 1938. A junior NCO filling this appointment (not uncommon late in the war) was designated 'Acting CSM' (*Hauptfeldwebeldiensttuer*).

With the widespread use of garments other than service tunics, a sequence of simplified officers' and NCOs' rank insignia were introduced on 22 August 1942, prescribed for display on the left sleeve of the M1940 and M1942 drill tunics, M1941 and M1942 protective jackets, M1942 winter jacket and M1943 anorak. They comprised embroidered horizontal pairs of oakleaves and/or horizontal bars on a black cloth rectangle. General officers wore a pair of gold oakleaves above 2-1 bars, and all more junior ranks green insignia. Field officers wore two pairs of oakleaves above 3-1 bars; subaltern officers, one pair of oakleaves above 3-1 bars; and NCOs, 5-1 bars.

Branch insignia

Branch-colours (*Waffenfarben*) on field uniforms were worn as piping on peaked service caps; braid chevrons on field caps (until 10 July 1942); officers' shoulder-strap underlay, and other ranks' piping (the latter from 26 November 1938); as central pipings on the braids of officers' collar patches, and (until 26 November 1938) central stripes on those of other ranks' field tunic collar-patches.

Rifle Regts fighting in Panzer Divs wore the 'Panzer pink' branch-colour from 15 October 1935 until 28 November 1939, when they changed to 'meadow-green' – a yellowish light green, lighter than the Light Infantry (*Jäger*) and Mountain Infantry grass-green. Rifles were redesignated Panzergrenadiers on 5 July 1942, still wearing meadow-green, although some pre-1939 unit personnel continued to wear pink unofficially. Panzergrenadier Regts formed from Motorized Infantry adopted meadow-green, although some personnel retained Infantry white. The 21st and 26th PzGren Regts, parts of 24th Pz Div (redesignated from 1st Cav Div, 28 November 1941) continued to wear traditional Cavalry golden-yellow, as also worn by the division's Panzer regiment. As elite units the GD and Feldherrnhalle PzGren Regts wore white, as did Panzer Corps HQ PzGren units such as 79th PzFus Regt (XXIV Panzer Corps).



This *Leutnant* platoon commander of the Grossdeutschland PzGren or PzFus Regt is taking cover in a slit trench from incoming fire near Iasi, eastern Romania, in June 1944; note smoke from a shellburst in the background. He wears an M1942 helmet with a painted blotch pattern; an enlisted man's M1941 field-grey tunic with officers' M1935 patches on the collar; and M1940 field shoulder straps with a gilded metal 'GD' monogram. His awards are the M1942 Close Combat Clasp and an Iron Cross 1st Class. Interestingly, note that his SMG is an Italian Beretta Model 38A. (Nik Cornish at www.Stavka.org.uk)

Unit insignia

In peacetime, all ranks below general officer wore combinations of Gothic and Latin letters and Roman and Arabic numerals to identify their units, on the middle of the shoulder straps on field tunics and greatcoats. Field and subaltern officers wore them in gilded metal; senior NCOs in silver, aluminium or, in wartime, grey metal; junior NCOs and men in branch-colour chain-stitch or, from 19 March 1937, in machine-embroidered matt artificial silk. In addition, the pebbled shoulder-strap buttons carried identification: blank for Regt HQ; 'I–III', for Bn HQs; and '1–14' for companies.

For security reasons, on 1 September 1939 all ranks were ordered to remove these unit insignia, though sometimes the generic branch letters were retained and only the unit numbers were removed. During the Polish campaign some troops wore their shoulder straps upside-down, and from 20 December 1939 troops could wear plain field-grey shoulder-strap loops to disguise their unit (unpicking the embroidered insignia was a laborious task). Unit insignia were permitted inside Germany, and from 24 January 1940 3cm-wide field-grey shoulder-strap loops with branch-colour chain-stitch insignia were issued to junior NCOs and men. Insignia practices are listed in Tables 6 & 7 (pages 61 & 62) and the special insignia of the Grossdeutschland, Feldherrnhalle and Brandenburg units are also detailed and illustrated in MAA 380, *German Army Elite Units 1939–45*.

Some Panzer Divs are known to have adopted unofficial metal divisional badges for tolerated wear on the left side of caps, and these were probably worn by PzGren personnel in those formations. The following five are known to have been worn: 1st Pz Div from 1 January 1945, diagonal silver oakleaf (gold for highly decorated soldiers); 16th Pz Div, brass Y-with-crossbar rune on black shield edged brass; 19th Pz Div, 'battle rune' (*Kampfrune*, bar with both ends 'ticked' like a 'z', and crossbar) on a 'tank' parallelogram tactical symbol; 23rd Pz Div, seen as sleeve badge in British POW camp after May 1945, diagonal silver arrow with crossbar; and 24th Pz Div, a jumping horseman badge.

The most famous badge was a silver greyhound leaping over an arc of silver 'grass' on a dark grey oval edged silver. This was worn from spring 1943 by 16th Mot Inf Div, reorganized 23 June 1943 as 16th PzGren Div, and again from 28 March 1944 as 116th Panzer Division.

EQUIPMENT & PERSONAL WEAPONS

Officers

Unless they were subaltern platoon commanders (by 1944 most platoon commanders were NCOs), officers wore minimal field equipment.

The **officers' waist belt** introduced 14 March 1925 was a 45 to 55mm-wide brown leather belt, with a nickel-silver two-pronged rectangular frame buckle and a crossbrace. The M1934 belt, introduced 18 May 1934, was 50–55mm wide, reduced 22 August 1938 to 5cm. The crossbrace was abolished from 20 September 1939. From 31 October 1939 field and subaltern officers in combat units were required to wear on operations the other ranks' field uniform, M1935 black leather belt and marching-boots, but this order was widely ignored. The M1943 officers' belt, introduced 14 May 1943, was 45mm wide, and from 22 July 1943 the leather was ordered blackened – an order cancelled 30 October 1943.

Officers carried pistols reversed on the left hip in brown leather 'hardshell' or 'softshell' **holsters.** The five most popular pistols were the rarely seen 9mm Mauser C96 'broomhandle'; the M1908 9mm Parabellum P08, famous as the Luger; 9mm Walther P38; 7.65mm Walther PPK, favoured by senior officers; and 7.65mm Sauer 38(H). Captured pistols were also widely used.

The standard 6x30 **'short binoculars'** for junior officers and other ranks were covered in black grained leather (from July 1943, painted dark yellow), with a lid-shaped black leather lens cover, a black buttoning flap for securing to a front tunic button, and a brown leather neck strap. They were carried in a brown or blackened leather or resinated fibre case sometimes strapped to the right front hip. Senior officers often preferred 10x50 'long binoculars'.

The large rectangular brown leather **map/dispatch case**, introduced 26 August 1924, had a deep flap covering compartments for seven pencils, and hung by two straps from the right front hip. The M1935 case in blackened leather was similar in design.

OPPOSITE
This Panzergrenadier *Obergefreiter*, advancing to Stalingrad in October 1942, has the detachable canvas shoulder sling from his breadbag hooked around his M1942 helmet to secure camouflage foliage; the left-side eagle decal is just visible. The greenish-grey canvas Y-straps are supporting the A-frame *Gefechtsgepäck* on his back. The dark green collar of his M1935 field tunic has M1939 collar braids without branch-colour central pipings; his dark green M1935 shoulder straps, piped meadow-green, show an officer candidate's double aluminium-braid loops. He displays the Iron Cross 2nd Class buttonhole-ribbon, the Iron Cross 1st Class, and apparently both the M1940 bronze version of the Panzer Battle Badge for award to armoured Panzergrenadiers, and the silver M1940 Infantry Assault Badge. (Author's collection)

Senior NCOs

Senior NCOs wore the other ranks' waist belt and a pistol in a blackened leather holster. In September 1939 senior NCO platoon commanders wore the standard rifleman's equipment (from 1941, with an MP40 sub-machine gun) plus a dispatch case on the left front hip, cased binoculars, a compass and a signal-whistle.

Junior NCOs and men

Within the ten-man section or squad (*Gruppe*), the section leader (*Gruppenführer*), usually an *Unteroffizier*, had standard rifleman's equipment (or, from 1942, an SMG), binoculars and whistle. His deputy, usually a *Gefreiter*, and five riflemen, had rifleman's equipment. In the three-man light machine gun team, the first gunner fired the 7.92mm MG34 or MG42; he carried a holstered pistol on his left front hip and at right front a blackened leather LMG spares pouch. The second or replacement gunner also wore a pistol, but on his right front a triple ammunition pouch for his rifle; he carried four 50-round LMG 'basket' drums, a 300-round ammunition box, and a metal carrier with one or two spare barrels. The third gunner wore standard rifleman's equipment, and carried two ammunition boxes. The standard rifleman's equipment was as follows:

The blackened leather 30 to 40mm-wide **waist belt** had an M1936 pebbled aluminium (1940, steel) hook-and-plate buckle introduced 24 January 1936, painted field-grey. It bore a Wehrmacht Eagle, in a ring bearing GOTT MIT UNS – 'God (is) with us' – above an oakleaf half-wreath.

The M1920 **infantry support Y-straps** comprised three blackened leather straps uniting in a circular metal ring on the upper back. The central strap hooked under the back of the belt; the longer two, with metal adjustment buckles, were secured to the rifle ammunition pouches by D-rings, and had subsidiary outer straps which passed under the armpit to strap to the backpack. The M1935 infantry internal support straps were introduced 11 June 1935. They comprised two blackened leather straps worn under the tunic and hooked through two sets of three eyelets to the rifle ammunition pouches. An order of 18 April 1939 reverted to the M1920 Y-strap model.

Troops carried much of their spare clothing and subsistence kit in the M1934 or later M1939 backpacks. From 18 April 1939 these were succeeded for field use by the **'combat pack for infantry rifle companies',** comprising a triangular 'A-frame' of greenish-grey (later, khaki) stiffened webbing that hooked to M1939 infantry support straps by D-rings. Equipment in different combinations was strapped to the A-frame with canvas straps, e.g. messtin, above Zeltbahn shelter quarter and/or rolled greatcoat, above a canvas 'combat pack bag'.

The bolt-action Mauser 7.92mm Karabiner Kar98k, adopted in 1934, remained the standard German infantry rifle throughout the war. One set of M1911 triple **ammunition pouches** in black pebbled leather was worn on each side of the belt buckle, each pouch holding two five-round stripper clips (for a total of 60 rounds). The 7.92mm 1944 assault rifle (Sturmgewehr 44) was an effective selective-fire weapon that was introduced too late and in too limited numbers to affect the outcome on the battlefield. Its curved 32-round magazines were carried in triple left-and-right sets of reinforced canvas pouches, in drab light brown or greyish-green; the left set incorporated a pocket for a magazine loading tool. They attached to the belt by rear loops and to the Y-strap by a short strap and D-ring.

Junior officers and senior NCOs carried sub-machine guns; the 9mm Maschinenpistole MP38 was succeeded from 1940 by the simplified MP40. Its straight 32-round magazines were carried in triple left-and-right pouch sets, looped to the belt and hooked by a short, angled strap to the support straps, thus inclining the tops towards the centre of the torso. Made of greyish-green or light khaki canvas, they too had a loading-tool pocket at the outside bottom of the left-hand set.

The M1931 **breadbag** was made of grey (1940, greenish-brown) canvas, with aluminium fittings. It was supplied with a detachable shoulder sling, but was normally fixed by buttoned loops to the belt behind the right hip. It was supposed to contain the field cap, sweater, daily rations, cutlery and margarine container, and rifle-cleaning kit. The M1931 **messtin** comprised a tin 'cook pot' (steel, from 1942) with a fastening dish-type lid, painted drab green and carried strapped to the breadbag. The oval-shaped M1931 aluminium **water bottle** (1943, steel, also wood-fibre compound) had a dark

E EASTERN FRONT, 1943–45

(1) *Stabsgefreiter (neuer Art),* 156th Motorized Infantry Regt; Mius river, southern Russia, April 1943

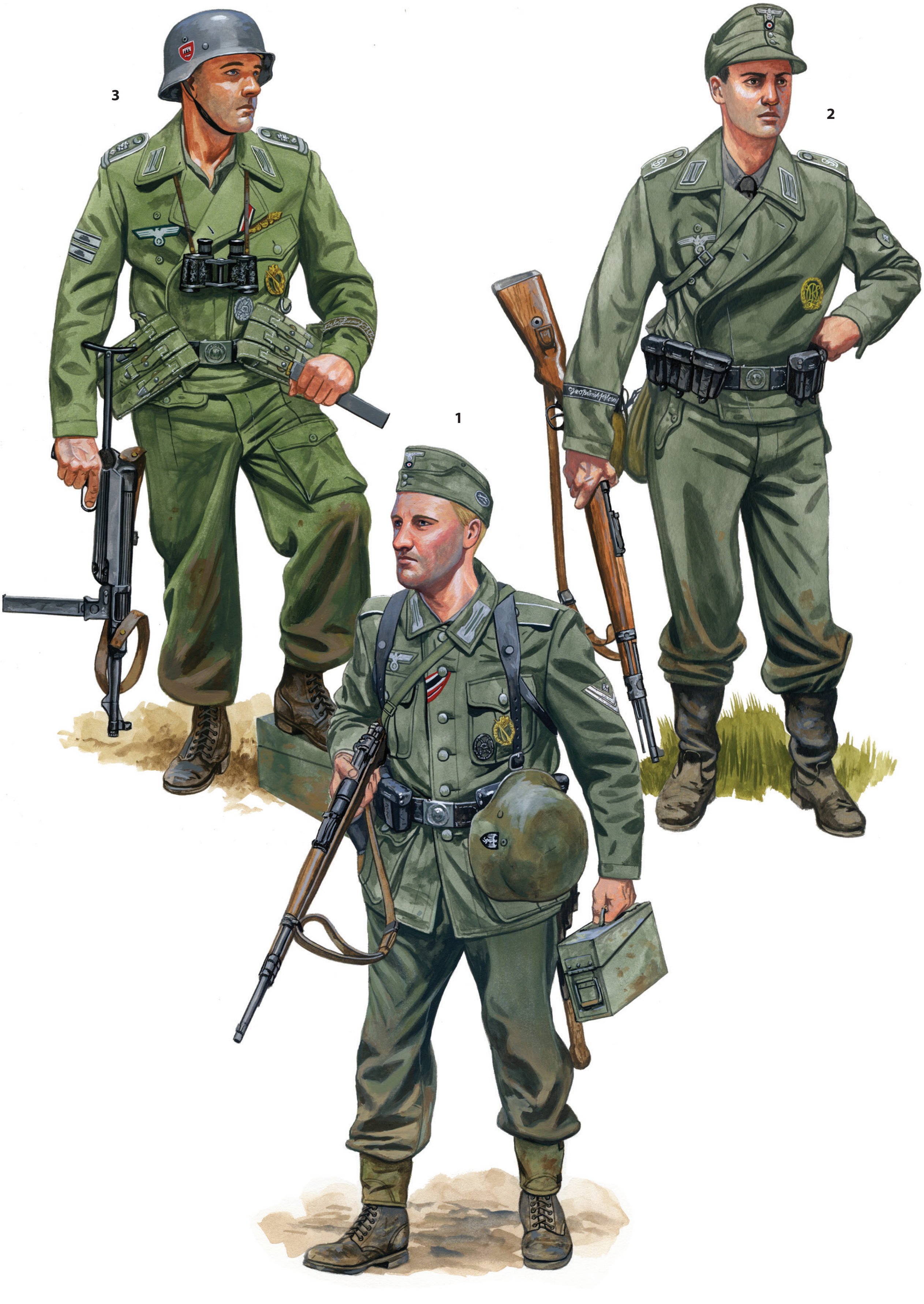
This LMG crew second gunner from 16th Mot Inf Div wears an M1942 field cap without the discontinued chevron of branch-colour, but on the left side is the badge commemorating Sascha, the division's greyhound mascot, unofficially introduced in spring 1943. His M1941 tunic has six front buttons, M1940 collar braids and shoulder straps, and the rank chevrons from a fatigue tunic, in white braid with black inner edging. His buttonhole-ribbons show awards of the Iron Cross 2nd Class and Russian Winter Campaign 1941/42 medals, and he displays the Motorized Infantry and black Wound badges. He wears M1940 canvas anklets over ankle-boots.

(2) *Panzerobergrenadier*, Grossdeutschland Panzergrenadier Regt; Kirovhrad, Ukraine, February 1944

This member of an armoured halftrack battalion wears the M1943 *Einheits* or 'universal' peaked field cap with M1942 insignia, and the M1940 field-grey 'special field uniform' modelled on the black tank-crew version. The field-grey collar patches with M1940 silver-grey braids are edge-piped white, as are the shoulder straps bearing the 'GD' monogram. On his left sleeve is the M1940 rank star; on his left breast, a bronze M1937 National Sports Badge; and on his right forearm a third-pattern 'Großdeutschland' divisional cuff title. His M1940 trousers are worn with M1939 'short-shaft' boots.

(3) *Fahnenjunker-Feldwebel*, Feldherrnhalle Grenadier Regt; Minsk, Belarus, July 1944

This officer candidate has unofficially added Feldherrnhalle badges to his M1942 helmet. He wears his M1942 reed-green special uniform jacket and trousers as a summer uniform; note the large pockets on the left breast and thigh. Collar patches and shoulder straps are piped Infantry-white; the latter have M1940 NCO braid, officer-candidate double loops, and a silver-grey aluminium Feldherrnhalle badge. He also wears two M1942 Tank Destruction Badges on his right sleeve; the M1942 'Feldherrnhalle' cuff title on his left; the Iron Cross 2nd Class buttonhole-ribbon; and, just visible on his left breast, the M1942 Close Combat Clasp, above an M1940 Motorized Infantry Assault Badge and silver Wound Badge. His equipment suggests a platoon commander.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grey-painted aluminium drinking cup strapped over its neck, and a brown felt insulating cover opened with four studs. It too was carried hooked to the breadbag.

The M1934 **entrenching tool** had a squared, black-painted blade with a short brown wooden shaft. It was looped to the belt on the left hip in a frame-like carrier made of brown or blackened leather. It was later replaced with the M1938 folding spade, whose blade could be locked at right-angles to the handle for use as a pick. Late-production carriers were made partly of a tan-coloured pressed cardboard compound. Usually carried over the tool carrier was the M1939 or shorter M1942 brown leather frog for the 84/98 **bayonet** introduced in 1934, whose scabbard was tucked under the tool carrier's fastening strap.

The M1930 green rubberized-canvas **gasmask** had a flexible rubber frame, two large glass eyepieces, a circular screw-on gas filter in front of the mouth, and adjustable greenish-grey canvas head straps. The M1938 gasmask was similar in appearance but made of green or black moulded rubber. The 26cm-long M1930 fluted tin canister was painted greenish-brown, with greenish-grey canvas straps for carrying on the back or chest. The M1936 'short' canister was 25cm long, the M1938 canister 27.5cm. Troops were also issued the M1938 rubberized-canvas rectangular **anti-gas cape**, 200cm x 120cm and carried on the chest in a grey, greenish-brown or light brown pouch with a two-button flap and a canvas sling over the left shoulder; alternatively it was tied around the gasmask canister.

Finally, the water-repellent triangular *Zeltbahn 31* or **shelter quarter**, introduced 20 April 1932, was carried rolled and strapped behind the belt or on the A-frame combat pack. Of cotton gabardine twill, it was printed on both sides (one side dark shades, the other lighter) with a jagged green and brown camouflage pattern on a light green drab ground, overprinted with streaks of dark green 'rain'. Fitted with buttons and grommets, this was designed to serve as part of a bivouac tent, as a rain poncho or groundsheet, and as a camouflage cover for foxholes.

INFANTRY IN LIGHT DIVISIONS, 1938–43

Eight Light Divisions existed between 1 April 1938 and 13 May 1943, numbered 1–5, 90, 164 and 999.

Pre-war composition, 1934–39

Since mounted cavalry had proved relatively ineffective on the Western Front during the Great War, the victorious Entente powers had insisted that the *Reichsheer* included an unrealistic proportion of that arm. Three of the ten divisions were mounted cavalry: 1st & 3rd Cavalry Divs, formed 1 June 1920, and 2nd Cav Div, formed 1 May 1920. Together with the ban on armoured vehicles, this was intended to prevent the *Reichsheer* modernizing, but it also encouraged some senior German cavalry officers to believe (wrongly) that mounted formations could be preserved. The first years of Hitler's rule confirmed the worst fears of the diehards. A Cavalry Corps HQ was indeed

Generaloberst Erwin Rommel (left) talks to unit commanders in the North African desert, 1942. Rommel wears his M1935 service cap with British anti-gas eye shields, and a greenish-brown M1940 tropical shirt with shoulder-strap rank insignia. The officers at right wear M1940 tropical field caps, shirts and shorts in varying shades. The officer next to Rommel, wearing a white service-uniform shirt without rank insignia, is *Hauptmann* Wilhelm Bach, CO of I Bn/104th Rifle Regt, a former priest and a gifted tactician; he successfully defended Halfaya ('Hellfire') Pass on 5 June 1941 against British armour, for which he was awarded the Knight's Cross on 9 July. (Bundesarchiv/ CC-BY-SA)

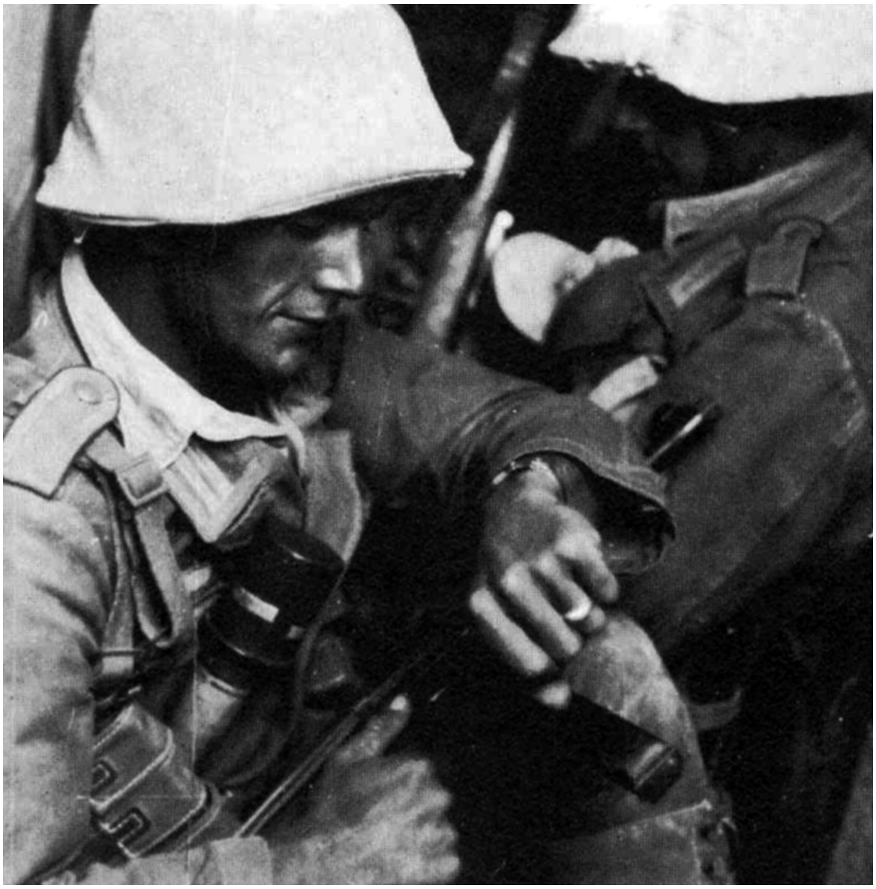
formed 1 April 1934 with, from 1 October 1934, 1st and 2nd Cav Divs; but Cav Regts were systematically converted to motorized Rifle and Panzer Regts, and both divisions were disbanded 1 April 1937, leaving only the 1st Cav Bde from 1 April 1939.

3rd Cavalry Division was reorganized 12 October 1937 as the 1st Light Bde (*1. leichte Brigade*), planned as the first of three such brigades. The Light Bde was modelled on the French Army's 'Light Mechanized Div' concept. It comprised three motorized regts (4th Rifle, 6th Recce, & 76th Artillery), plus 65th Pz Bn and support services. Brigade HQ proved unable to control such a large number of motorized and unmotorized units, and on 10 November 1938 the brigade was redesignated as 1st Light Div (*1. Leichte Division*). The 2nd and 3rd Light Divs were formed the same day, while 4th Light Div had formed 1 April 1938 from the Mobile Div (*Schnelle Division*) of the Austrian Army.

At war, 1939

The 1st–4th Light Divs were mobilized in August 1939. Each 10,000–11,000 strong, they were smaller than a Panzer Div and had fewer tanks. Each comprised a Panzer Bn, and either one three-bn motorized Rifles Regt (4th Regt) or 2 two-bn regts (6th–11th Regts). These regts were designated 'Cavalry Rifles' (*Kavallerie-Schützen-Regiment*), in memory of the dismounted Cavalry regts in the Great War, and traditional unit names and ranks were retained.

The 4th Cav Rifles Regt had a Regt HQ with a m'cycle ptn and a motorized supply column; and 13 company-size squadrons (*Schwadron,* Sqn), in three bns mounted on trucks. I Cav Rifles Bn (*Kavallerie-Schützen-*



Tobruk, November 1941: a Panzergrenadier *Unteroffizier* section commander armed with an MP40 and a stick grenade waits in a trench for the order to attack. His originally light brown cotton helmet cover is bleached almost white by the desert sun. The M1940 tropical tunic has silver-grey collar braids, and copper-brown silk NCO *Tresse* around the collar and shoulder straps, the latter being piped in meadow-green. (Author's collection)

Abteilung) had a Bn HQ (engr ptn with 3x LMGs); 1st–3rd Rifles Sqns (each 18x LMGs, 2x HMGs, 3x 50cm lt mtrs); 4th Hvy Wpns Sqn (AT ptn with 3x 3.7cm PaK 36, 1 LMG; 8-gun HMG ptn; mortar ptn, 6x 8cm); and a light supply column. II & III Bns had the same organization in 5th–8th and 9th–12th Sqns, and there was also 17th IG Squadron. The 2,295-strong 6th–11th Cav Rifle Regts each had eight sqns, in I Bn (1st–3rd Rifles, 4th Hvy Wpns) and II Bn (5th–7th Rifles, 8th Hvy Wpns) squadrons.

All four Light Divs fought in the Polish campaign, with the 1st–3rd helping to trap advancing Polish forces at the Bzura river 9–22 September, while 4th Light Div fought in southern Poland. Poland proved the superiority of the Panzer Div over the Light Div, and on 18 October 1939 the 1st–3rd Light Divs were converted to 6th–8th Pz Divs, with 4th Light Div reorganized as 9th Pz Div on 3 January 1940. Cavalry Rifle Regts were redesignated Rifle Regts, the *Abteilung* and *Schwadron* becoming *Bataillon* and *Kompanie* respectively.

North Africa, 1941–43

The Light Div concept was revived during the North African campaign of 14 February 1941–13 May 1943. The modest 'Libya Blocking Unit' (*Sperrverband Libyen*) which first disembarked at Tripoli was designated 5th Light Div, with 200th Special Inf Regt HQ, 8th MG Bn, 5th Pz Regt and supporting troops. It saw immediate action during Gen Rommel's first offensive at El Agheila in March 1941, driving British forces (who did not

Table 3: Infantry in Light Divisions (in chronological order of formation, 1 Apr 1938–26 Feb 1943)

4 Light Div (formed 1.4.1938), Cav Rifle Regts 10, 11; Poland (9.1939); W. Germany (12.1939); 9 Panzer Div (3.1.1940).

1 Light Div (formed 10.11.1938), Cav Rifle Regt 4; Poland (9.1939); 6 Panzer Div (18.10.1939).

2 Light Div (formed 10.11.1938), Cav Rifle Regts 6, 7; Poland (9.1939); 7 Panzer Div (18.10.1939).

3 Light Div (formed 10.11.1938), Cav Rifle Regts 8, 9; Poland (9.1939); 8 Panzer Div (18.10.1939).

5 Light Div (formed 18.2.1941), Special Inf Regt HQ 200; Libya (3.1941); joined 21 Panzer Div (1.8.1941).

90 Light Africa Div (formed 26.11.1941 from Africa Special Div HQ), Rifle Regt 155, Inf Regt 361, Tunisia; Libya (3.1942); redesignated 90 Light Africa Div (1.4.1942), Light Inf Regts 155, 200, Rifle Regt 361, Libya; redesignated 90 Africa Div (26.7.1942); PzGren Regts 155, 200, 361, Libya; Egypt (8.1942); Battle of El Alamein (11.1942); Tunisia (1.1943); surrendered (13.5.1943).

164 Light Africa Div (formed 15.8.1942 from Crete Fortress Div), PzGren Regts 125, 382, 433, Egypt; Libya (11.1942); PzGren Regts Africa, 382, 433 (26.2.1943); Tunisia (3.1943); surrendered (5.1943).

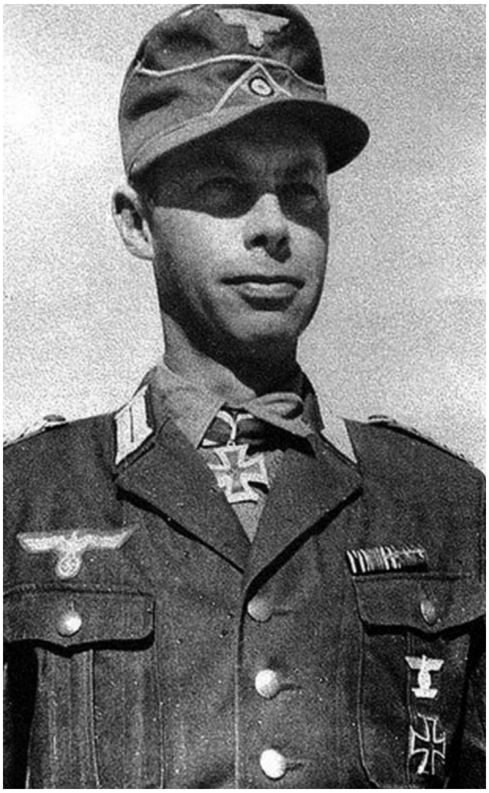
Africa Div 999 (formed 2.2.1943 from Africa Bde 999), Africa Rifle Regts 961–963, N. France; Tunisia (4.1943); surrendered (13.5.1943).

realize the ‘division’s’ weakness) to Halfaya (‘Hellfire’) Pass in Egypt. On 1 August 1941, 5th Light Div was reorganized as 21st Panzer Division. Three more ‘Africa Divs’ were subsequently formed in North Africa, and, like 5th Light Div, they had non-standard organizations; they most resembled PzGren Divs, but without a Panzer element.

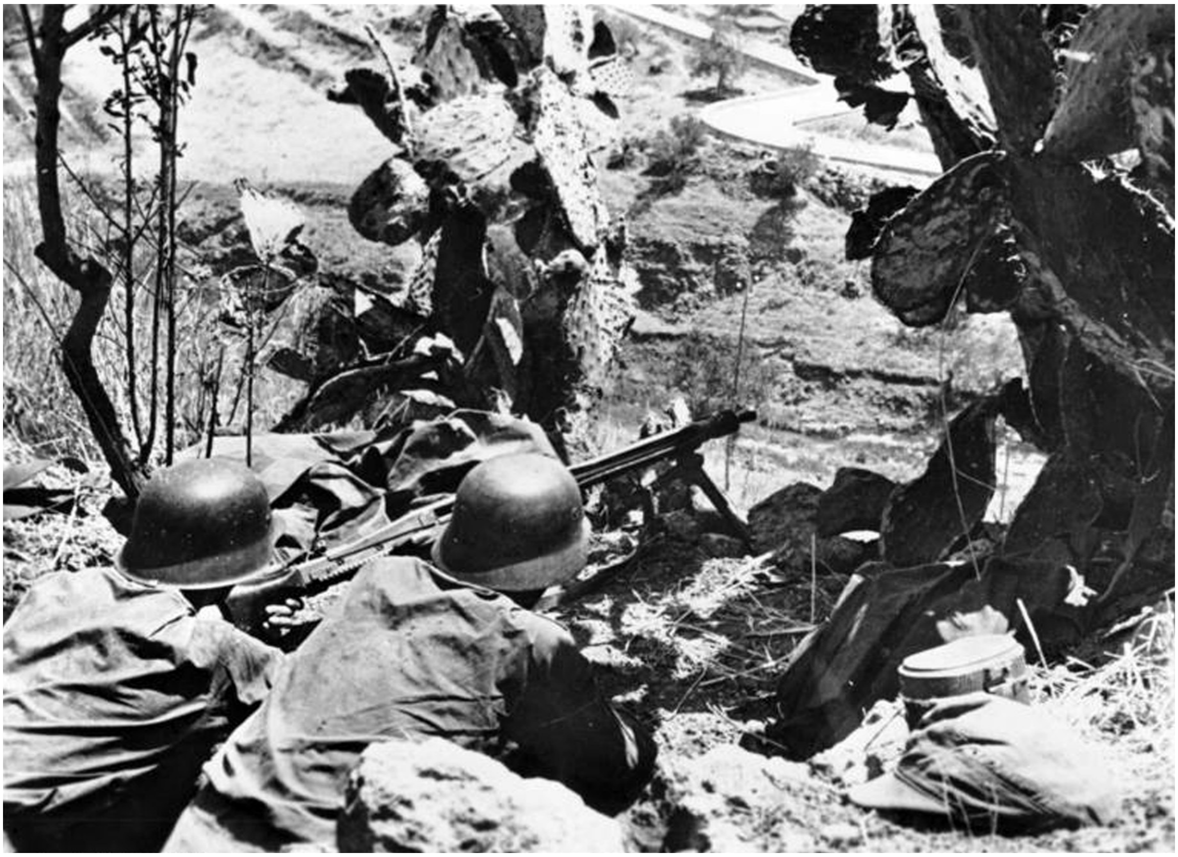
The 90th Light Africa Div (*90. Leichte Afrika-Division*) was formed 26 November 1941, with 155th Rifle Regt (including Arab 287th & 288th Special Units); 361 Inf (Africa) Regt, with two bns of German and Austrian former veterans of the pre-war French Foreign Legion, who were frowned upon by the Nazi regime; and supporting services, but no tanks. On 1 April 1942 it was redesignated 90th Light Inf Div (*90. Leichte Infanterie-Division*) – not to be confused with the German Army’s *Jäger* divisions, termed ‘light infantry’ in this text – and from 26 July 1942 it comprised three 2-bn PzGren Regts (numbered 155, 200 & 361), a Panzer bn, and supporting services.

The 164th Light Africa Div was formed 15 August 1942 with three 3-bn PzGren Regts (125, 382 & 433), and supporting services. After suffering heavy losses at El Alamein it was reorganized with three 2-bn PzGren Regts (Afrika, 382 & 433).

The 999th Africa Bde (*Afrika-Brigade 999*) was established 6 October 1942 in Germany, as a penal unit for men deemed ‘unfit to bear arms’ (*Wehrunwürdig*). The bde had two 2-bn inf regts designated 961st & 962nd Africa Rifle Regts, and supporting artillery, engineers and signals. It comprised



Oberstleutnant Hans-Levin von Baby, CO of 361st Rifle Regt in 90th Light Africa Div, on the occasion of the award of his Knight’s Cross on 13 December 1941. The officers’ silver-piped M1940 tropical field cap bears a blue-grey eagle and a tricolour cockade on light brown backings, and a meadow-green *Waffenfarbe* chevron. His M1940 tropical tunic shows the factory-applied enlisted ranks’ M1940 blue-grey breast eagle on light brown backing, but he has added the M1935 collar patches and M1940 field shoulder straps with meadow-green distinctions from his continental uniform. On his left pocket he displays the 1914 Iron Cross 1st Class below the silver eagle-shaped ‘bar’ for a subsequent award of the 1939 decoration. (Author’s collection)



Wearing M1940 tropical shirts, two men of an MG42 team wait in a defensive position in Sicily, June 1943. Both are wearing M1942 helmets; the uncrimped edge of the machine-gunner's is particularly clear. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J14874/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

cadre officers and other ranks, who treated with brutality the penal soldiers (of whom 70 per cent were criminals sentenced to prison terms, 30 per cent communists and others deemed anti-Nazi). Unsurprisingly, the penal troops proved to be poor soldiers, frequently going absent or deserting to the enemy. The Bde reorganized in Tunis on 2 February 1943 as the 16,000-strong 999th Africa Div, with three 3-bn Africa Rifle Regts (961–963) and supporting services.

German forces in North Africa comprised the three Light Divs (90, 164 & 999), one Inf Div (334), and three Panzer Divs (10, 15 & 21). 90th Light Africa Div fought consistently well throughout the campaign, and 164 Light and 15 & 21 Pz Divs took heavy casualties in the second battle of El Alamein, October–November 1942. The 10th Pz Div heavily defeated US II Corps at Kasserine Pass, Tunisia, in February 1943, but on 13 May all German troops went into captivity. The 90th Light Africa Div reformed as 90th PzGren Div in Sardinia, 6 July 1943.

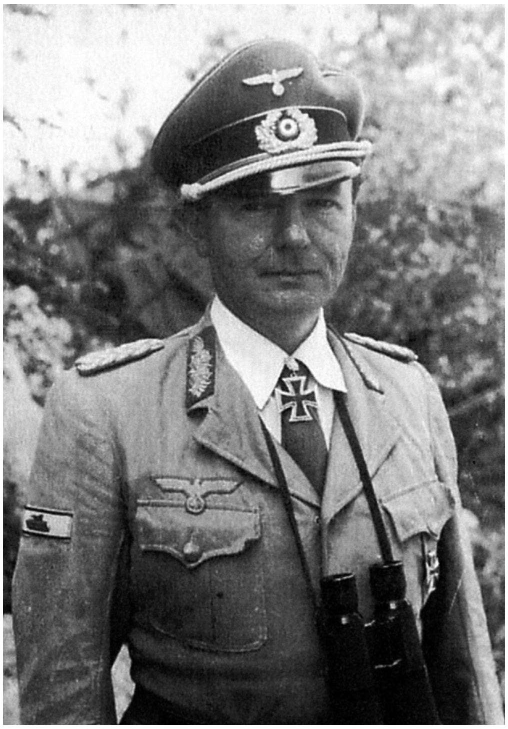
TROPICAL FIELD UNIFORMS, 1941–43

Unlike the army on the Russian Front in 1941, the forces in North Africa were well equipped for their environment with the M1940 tropical uniform, production of which had commenced in December 1940. Most items, which were standard issue for all ranks, were manufactured in a heavy greenish-brown ribbed cotton drill; depending largely upon length of use, actual colours varied from dark greenish-brown to sandy brown.

Headgear

M1935 & M1942 steel helmets were usually painted light sandy brown, initially with the Wehrmacht Eagle decal exposed on the left side. A heavy cotton-drill helmet-cover in light brown might be worn.

M1940 pith helmets provided welcome shade from the desert sun when out of action. The pressed cork helmet was covered with segmented light brown or light greenish-brown cloth, and bore the two M1934 shield badges in light metal pin-on form. Captured British, French or South African (incorrectly called 'Dutch') equivalents were also worn with German insignia applied.



Generalmajor Ernst-Günther Baade, commander of the 90th PzGren Div, photographed at Monte Cassino, Italy, in March 1944. He wears the field-grey M1935 officers' service cap with general officers' gold piping, eagle, wreath and chin-cords. As a former Africa Corps veteran he wears an M1940 greenish-brown field tunic with general officers' M1938 shoulder straps, M1927 collar patches, and M1935 gold wire breast eagle. He displays his Knight's Cross with Oakleaves, the latter awarded on 22 February 1944, with a white service-uniform shirt and, unusually, a necktie. Note the M1942 Tank Destruction Badge on his right sleeve, for destroying an enemy tank with hand-held weapons, and the senior officers' 6x50 'long binoculars'. (Author's collection)

The **M1940 tropical peaked field cap**, introduced mid-1941, became the symbol of the Africa Corps. It had a long cloth peak, and the crown was stitched with a scalloped false-flap effect at the front. Insignia were a blue-grey cotton woven Army Eagle on a rust-brown backing, above a branch-colour chevron (abolished 10 July 1942) surrounding a woven national cockade on a brown diamond backing. Officers wore 3mm aluminium cord piping (general officers, gold) around the crown and in the scallop at the front. Unofficially they often substituted an M1935 silver-embroidered Army Eagle and cockade, both on dark-green backings.

The **M1942 other ranks' peakless field cap** was the M1935 sidecap in tropical twill, with the eagle, chevron and cockade as worn on the tropical peaked field cap. Both caps were usually manufactured with a bright scarlet lining.

Tunics and overclothing

The **M1940 tropical field tunic** was based on the M1933 field tunic for NCOs and men, but open at the collar. It had five (sometimes four) pebbled front buttons painted light greenish-brown; plain cuffs; two breast pockets and two waist pockets, all external, with box pleats and scalloped, buttoned flaps. M1940 silver-grey collar braids were sewn directly to the open collar, and a machine-woven blue-grey Army Eagle on a rust-brown backing above the right breast pocket. Detachable uniform-colour shoulder straps had branch-colour piping. Officers usually wore their M1935 collar patches (general officers, M1927 gold *Larisch* pattern on red patches), M1940 shoulder straps, and the M1935 silver (generals, gold) embroidered breast eagle. The tunic was worn with a light greenish-brown shirt and tie; the **M1940 tropical shirt** had four small fibre front buttons, and two breast pockets with pleats and scalloped flaps. Officers' M1940 or other ranks' tropical shoulder straps with field-grey pebbled buttons were added when the shirt was worn as the outer garment. The **M1942 tropical field tunic,** seen after October 1942, was the tropical version of the continental M1942 field tunic with unpleated pockets.

The **M1940 tropical greatcoat** was the M1935 greatcoat manufactured in deep chocolate-brown wool with matt field-grey buttons. General officers unbuttoned the top two buttons to display the bright red cloth lining of their lapels.

Legwear and footwear

The **M1940 tropical breeches** for all ranks, with a concealed integral belt, were worn with high boots; general officers displayed their bright red side-stripes and seam-piping. The **M1940 first pattern tropical high boots** were of greenish-brown canvas, with brown leather toe, instep and inner ankle reinforcements, and long black laces. The **second pattern,** introduced mid-1941, extended the leather uppers, and the slightly shorter-shaft **third pattern** of later that year further extended the toe and uppers.

M1940 long trousers were preferred to the breeches, and troops often added draw-strings to close the bottom of the legs for wear with ankle-boots. The **M1940 first pattern tropical ankle-boots** had brown leather toe and instep reinforcements and black laces; the **second pattern,** introduced late in 1942, extended the leather parts. **M1940 shorts** were worn with either type of boots, with or without knee-socks.

Cadre officers and other ranks of the 999th Africa Division wore standard tropical uniforms and insignia. The penal troops wore no insignia at all; they could, however, be rehabilitated for bravery in battle, regaining their ranks and insignia.

Tropical field uniforms, 1943–45

Following defeat in North Africa on 13 May 1943, permission was given for tropical uniforms to be worn in the hot summer months in south-west France, Greece, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Romania, extended on 21 June to

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ITALY, 1944–45

(1) *Major*, 15th Panzergrenadier Division; Monte Cassino, April 1944

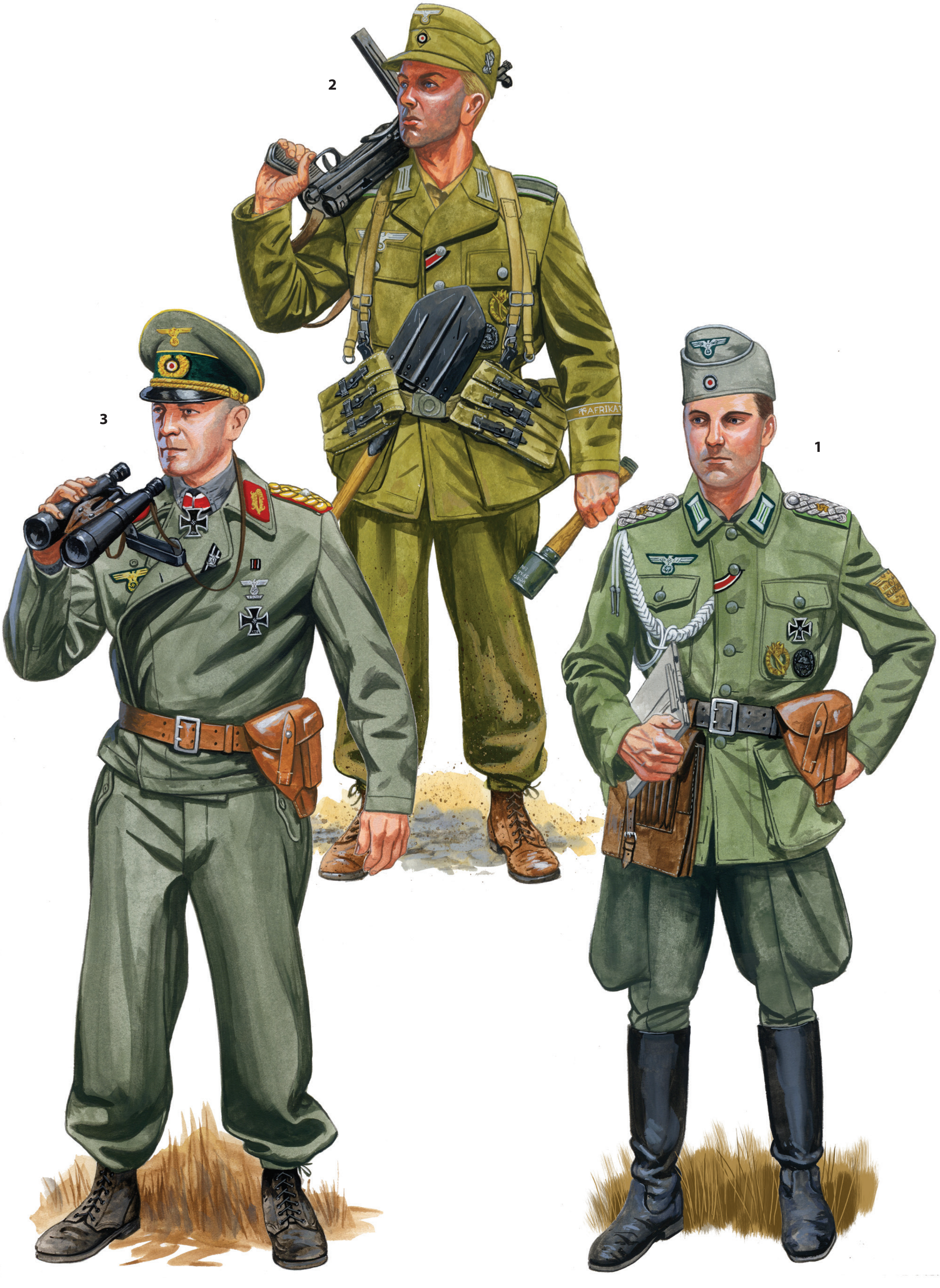
This general officer's adjutant at Div HQ, identified as such by his M1927 dull aluminium wire adjutant's aiguillettes, wears an M1938 field cap with silver-wire embroidered insignia and piping. In the summer heat he wears a lightweight M1942 reed-green tunic, with M1935 collar patches and M1940 shoulder straps bearing meadow-green branch distinctions, and a silver embroidered breast eagle on dark green backing. On his left sleeve he displays the M1943 Kuban Shield campaign award. His blackened M1943 officers' belt supports a dispatch case and a Walther P38 pistol.

(2) *Unteroffizier*, 361st Panzergrenadier Regt; Rimini, September 1944

This 90th PzGren Div section commander wears the tropical items permitted in summer in southern Europe, and his M1940 field cap displays the 90th's 'Sardinia' side badge. His light greenish-brown cotton drill M1943 tunic has tropical collar braids and breast eagle, and (unofficially) M1940 field-grey shoulder straps piped meadow-green, with mouse-grey NCOs' *Tresse*. He sports on his left forearm the M1943 'Afrika' campaign cuff title for North Africa veterans. He has a tropical belt and supporting straps with magazine pouches for his MP40, with an M1938 folding entrenching tool tucked in (and offering some notional protection), and carries an M1924 stick grenade.

(3) *Generalleutnant* Fritz Polack, 29th Panzergrenadier Division; Po river valley, April 1945

The divisional commander wears an M1935 general officers' service cap with gold piping, chin-cords and M1942 insignia. General officers had wide discretion regarding clothing, and Polack wears the Panzer-cut M1940 field-grey special field uniform; his insignia are an M1935 hand-embroidered gold breast eagle, M1927 gold *Larisch* embroidery on red collar patches, and gold-and-silver plaited shoulder straps on red underlay with the single silver star of his rank. At his throat is the Knight's Cross awarded 27 August 1943; on his breast are the Great War Cross of Honour ribbon, above the 1914 Iron Cross 1st Class surmounted by the silver eagle of the 1939 'bar', and in his buttonhole the 2nd Class ribbon with 1939 bar.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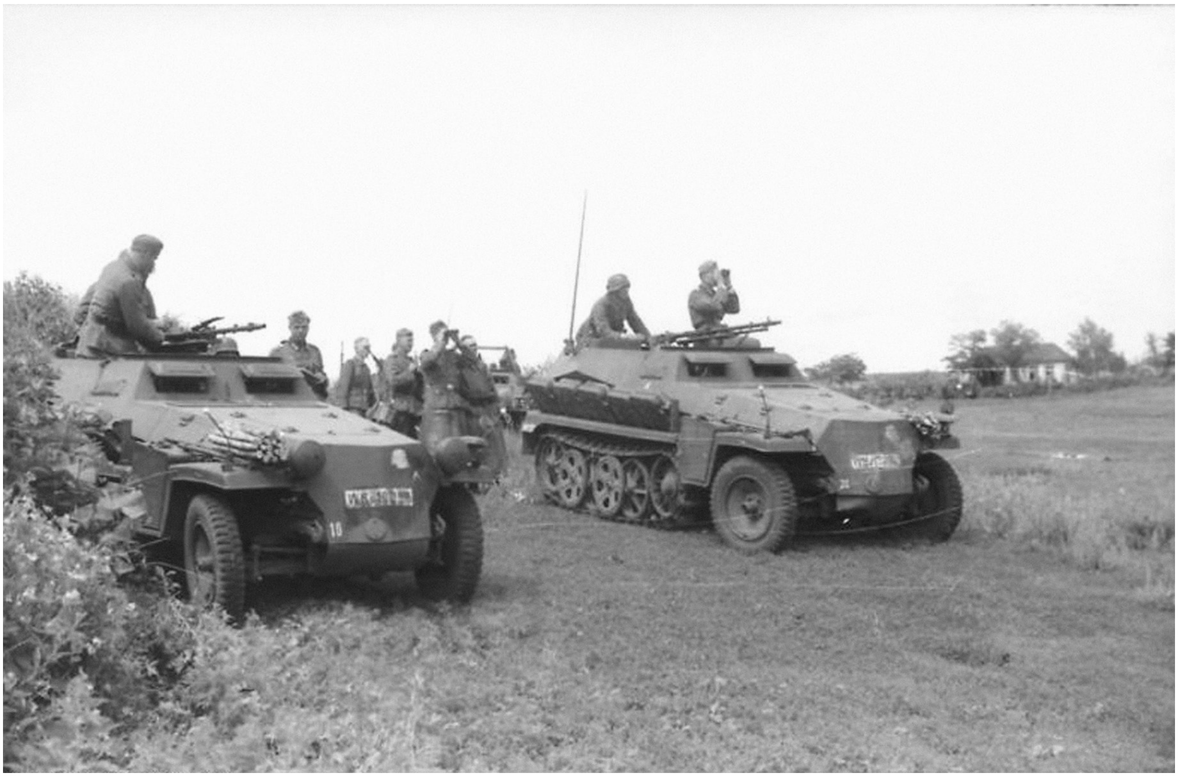
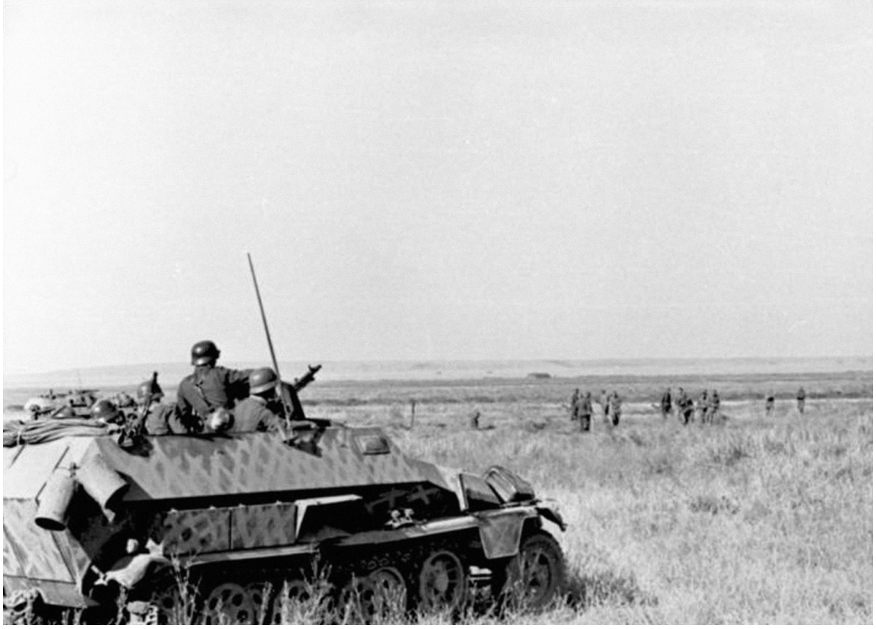


Two SdKfz 251 halftrack APCs halt in open country, late May 1942, while officers scan the terrain ahead. The white *Stahlhelm* badge at upper right on the front plate identifies the Grossdeutschland Motorized Infantry Division. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-748-0100-33/ Kempe/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

Italy and Ukraine. This allowed the issue of two tropical items manufactured too late for distribution in North Africa. The **M1942 tropical pith helmet,** introduced late in that year, was made in seamless pressed greenish-grey felt. The **M1943 tropical tunic** was a tropical version of the M1943 field-grey field tunic, its unpleated pockets with square-cut flaps.



On the featureless steppes of southern Russia, August 1942, the LMG gunners of SdKfz 251 APCs remain on board as the motorized infantry sections scout ahead on foot. Note the 'expedient' camouflage of the nearest halftrack, with criss-cross streaks of pale brown mud painted on to dry over the dark grey factory finish. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-217-0494-34/ Geller/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

LIGHT DIV & TROPICAL INSIGNIA

Ranks & field rank insignia

Refer to 'Infantry in Panzer Divisions, 1935–45' (above), except for the following:

Cavalry Rifle Regts (12 October 1937–1 April 1940) used traditional Cavalry ranks of *Rittmeister* and *Wachtmeister*, etc. These changed to the Infantry ranks of *Hauptmann* and *Feldwebel*, etc., when Cav Rifle Regts became Rifle Regts of Panzer Divs from October 1939. The lowest ranks of *Oberschütze/Schütze* remained unchanged. Penal soldiers in the 999th Africa Bde and Div were all reduced to the rank of 'private on probation' (*Bewährungsschütze*).

Officers wore their normal detachable shoulder straps on the tropical tunic, shirt and greatcoat. Other ranks wore rounded shoulder straps in the same greenish-brown cotton drill as the tropical field tunic, with branch-colour piping. Non-commissioned officers wore 9mm copper-brown *Tresse* braid on their collars and shoulder straps, with grey aluminium-and-zinc alloy rank stars. A *Hauptfeldwebel* wore two 9mm copper-brown aluminium diamond-pattern braid rings round the tunic cuffs. Men wore copper-brown aluminium rank stars and braid chevrons on uniform-colour triangles, on the upper left sleeve. **Trade badges** were produced in tropical versions, with the golden-yellow woven badge and 2mm aluminium inner piping on a circular greenish-brown cotton drill patch for the tropical tunic or on chocolate-brown wool for the tropical greatcoat.[3]

Branch insignia

Branch-colours were worn as chevrons on the peaked and peakless field caps (until 10 July 1942); as officers' shoulder-strap underlay and collar-patch braid pipings; and as other ranks' shoulder-strap piping.

The seven Cav Rifle Regts fighting in Light Bdes and Divs wore a Gothic 'S' over the Regt number on shoulder straps with traditional Cavalry golden-

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[3] Also see Men-at Arms 365, *World War II German Battle Insignia*, for details of the 'Afrikakorps' organizational and 'Afrika' campaign cuff titles.

Looking backwards through the interior of an Sfz 251 to the open rear doors, showing the side benches. Comfort in all armoured vehicles was minimal. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-701-0380-34/ Ütrecht/ Uetrecht/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

The German Army never achieved the level of mechanization it had planned, and most motorized troops were transported by truck to join battle on foot. This half-section of motorized infantry are hitching a ride on a PzKw III tank in southern Russia, August 1942. Whilst this was practical when travelling some distance, and Red Army 'tank riders' were often employed even in the front line, it was highly dangerous in battle, and German troops normally dismounted well before contact. These soldiers are wearing M1940 reed-green fatigue dress as summer field uniforms. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-217-0492-22/ Geller/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

yellow underlay or piping from 12 October 1937. The 'S' and number were removed 1 September 1939, and Cav Rifle Regts redesignated Rifle Regts from 26 September 1939. These Rifle Regts wore meadow-green branch piping and (if in Germany or away from the front line) the Regt number only, although some individuals retained golden-yellow unofficially. They were reorganized as PzGren Regts, with meadow-green piping and Regt numbers, from 5 July 1942. The four Africa Rifle Regts also wore meadow-green and Regt numbers. The large cadre of officers and other ranks supervising the penal 999th Africa Bde/ Div wore white branch-colour with Regt numbers.

Equipment

Refer to 'Infantry in Panzer Divisions, 1935–45' (above), except for the following:

The **M1940 officers' tropical waistbelt** was of greenish-brown webbing, with a light metal circular clasp bearing a Wehrmacht Eagle in an oak wreath, painted greenish-brown. It was rarely worn, as officers preferred their brown leather waist belt. The **other ranks' waist belt** was also of greenish-brown webbing, with the standard army buckle in darkened metal. M1940 greenish-brown webbing tropical versions of several continental equipment items were issued, including the **infantry support straps** and **bayonet frog.** The M1911 rifle **ammunition pouches** were often left unblackened, in pebbled brown leather. The M1940 tropical **water bottle** was the M1931 continental model made in dark brown resin-impregnated fibre. Metal items, such as the gasmask canister, were sprayed light brown or light greenish-brown as desert camouflage.

INFANTRY IN MOTORIZED INFANTRY DIVISIONS, 1937–43

Seventeen Mot Inf Divs (numbered 2, 3, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 25, 29, 36, 60, 155, 179, 345 & 386, plus Grossdeutschland) existed between 12 October 1937 and 22 June 1943, each with two or three motorized infantry (15 October 1942, motorized grenadier) regiments.

Pre-war composition, 1937–39

Motorized Infantry Divs (*motorisiert – mot.*) were converted from dismounted Inf Divs, with the Div HQ, Inf Regts and supporting services retaining their unit numbers. The first four (numbered 2, 13, 20 & 29) were

Table 4: Infantry in Motorized Infantry Divisions (in chronological order of formation, 12 Oct 1937–25 Nov 1942)

2 Mot Inf Div (12.10.1937 from 2 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 5, 25, 92; Poland (9.1939); Mot Inf Regt 92 transferred (15.10.1939); France (6.1940); Poland (8.1940); 12 Panzer Div (5.10.1940).

13 Mot Inf Div (12.10.1937 from 13 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 33, 66, 93; Poland (9.1939); Mot Inf Regt 33 transferred (18.10.1939); France (5.1940); Poland (9.1940); 13 Panzer Div (11.10.1940).

20 Mot Inf Div (12.10.1937 from 20 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 69, 76, 90; Poland (9.1939); Mot Inf Regt 69 transferred (early1940); Belgium (5.1940); France (6.1940); C. Russia (6.1941); N. Russia (9.1941); Mot Gren Regts 76, 90 (15.10.1942); C. Russia (12.1942); 20 PzGren Div (23.7.1943).

29 Mot Inf Div (12.10.1937 from 29 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 15, 71, 86; Poland (9.1939); Mot Inf Regt 86 transferred (early 1940); Luxembourg, France (5.1940); Belarus, C. Russia (6.1941); S. Russia (7.1942); Mot Gren Regts 15, 71 (15.10.1942); destroyed Stalingrad (1.1943); reformed France (1.3.1943), Mot Gren Regts 15, 71; 29 PzGren Div (23.6.1943).

16 Mot Inf Div (6.8.1940 from 16 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 60, 156; France (12.1940); Yugoslavia (4.1941); Ukraine (7.1941); S. Russia (9.1942); Mot Gren Regts 60, 156 (15.10.1942); 16 PzGren Div (23.6.1943).

60 Mot Inf Div (15.8.1940 from 60 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 92, 120; Poland (11.1940); Romania (1.1941); Yugoslavia (4.1941); Ukraine (7.1941); S. Russia (8.1941); Mot Gren Regts 92, 120 (15.10.1942); destroyed Stalingrad (1.1943); reformed S. France (17.2.1943); Feldherrnhalle PzGren Div (20.6.1943).

14 Mot Inf Div (15.10.1940 from 14 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 11, 53; Belarus (7.1941); C. Russia (8.1941); Mot Gren Regts 11, 53 (15.10.1942); 14 Inf Div (30.6.1943).

3 Mot Inf Div (27.10.1940 from 3 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 8, 29; N. Russia (9.1941); Belarus (5.1942); Caucasus (8.1942); Mot Gren Regts 8, 29 (15.10.1942); destroyed Stalingrad (1.1943); reformed W. France (1.3.1943); 3 PzGren Div (23.6.1943).

18 Mot Inf Div (1.11.1940 from 18 Inf. Div), Mot Inf Regts 30, 51; N. Russia (7.1941); Mot Gren Regts 30, 51 (15.10.1942); 18 PzGren Div (23.6.1943).

36 Mot Inf Div (1.11.1940 from 36 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 87, 118; N. Russia (7.1941); C. Russia (10.1941); Mot Gren Regts 87, 118 (15.10.1942); 36 Inf Div (1.5.1943).

10 Mot Inf Div (15.11.1940 from 10 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 20, 41; Belarus (6.1941); W. Russia (7.1941); Ukraine (8.1941); Moscow (12.1941); N. Russia (1.1942); Mot Gren Regts 20, 41 (15.10.1942); C. Russia (4.1943); 10 PzGren Div (23.6.1943).

25 Mot Inf Div (15.11.1940 from 25 Inf Div), Mot Inf Regts 35, 119; Ukraine (7.1941); C. Russia (10.1941); Mot Gren Regts 35, 119 (15.10.1942); 25 PzGren Div (23.6.1943).

Grossdeutschland Mot Inf Div (12.3.1942, from GD Reinforced Mot Inf Regt), 1, 2 GD Inf Regts; GD Gren Regt, GD Fusilier Regt (1.10.1942); GD PzGren Div (19.5.1943).

179 Mot Inf Div (27.4.1942 from 179 Div), Mot Inf Repl Regt 72, Inf Repl Regt 52, Rifle Repl Regt 81, Inf Repl Bn 205; redesignated 179 Pz Div (5.4.1943).

155 Mot Inf Div (10.5.1942), Rifle Repl Regt 5, Mot Inf Repl Regt 25; 155 Panzer Div (5.4.1943).

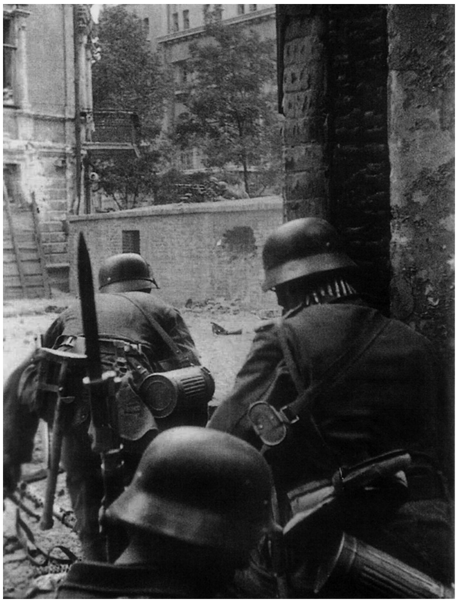
345 Mot Inf Div (24.11.1942), Mot Gren Regt 148, PzGren Regt 152; joined 29 Mot Inf Div (1.3.1943).

386 Mot Inf Div (25.11.1942 from 386 Inf Div), Mot Gren Regt 386, PzGren Regt 153; W. France joined 3 Mot Inf Div (1.3.1943).

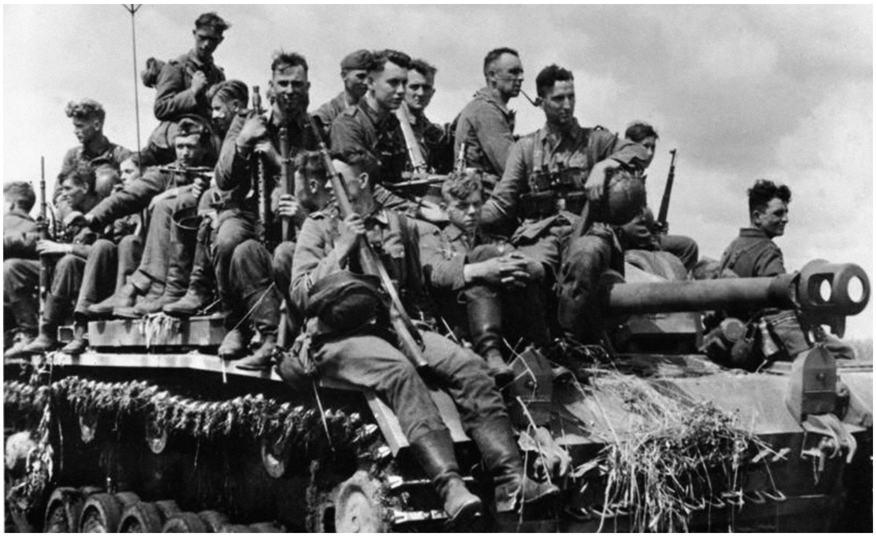
formed 12 October 1937, and were mobilized 1 August 1939 under XIV Motorized Corps.

A 1939 *Infanterie-Division (mot.)* comprised three Mot Inf Regts with supporting services, but no tanks. An *Infanterie-Regiment (mot.)* had a Regt HQ (with sigs ptn), and 14 cos in three 864-strong Mot Inf Bns mounted on trucks. The *I Infanterie-Bataillon (mot.)* had a Bn HQ, with a light supply column and a m'cyle ptn (3x LMGs); 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 9x LMGs, 2x HMGs, 3x 5cm lt mtrs), and 4th Hvy Wpns Co (8x HMGs, 6x 8cm mtrs). II Bn had the same organization in 5th–8th Cos, III Bn the same in 9th–12th Cos; plus the regt had 13th AT Co (12x 3.7cm PaK 36 guns, 4x LMGs), and 14th IG Co (8x 7.5cm guns).

The 13th and 20th Mot Inf Divs occupied the Czechoslovak Sudetenland in October 1938, and all four divs fought in the Polish campaign. However, three-regt divs proved too cumbersome, so during October 1939–early 1940 each was reduced to two regiments. On 1 October 1939 the Grossdeutschland (GD) Inf Regt – formerly the all-volunteer Berlin Guard Unit *Wachregiment Berlin*, recruited from all over Germany, and the Army's only Guards formation –



A three-man machine-gun team prepare to dash across an open street in Stalingrad, October 1942. The second gunner (right) has a full ammunition-belt around his neck, and a spare-barrel container slung; the third gunner (foreground) has his rifle bayonet fixed. The crew wear light field equipment without supporting straps; an M1931 breadbag, M1934 entrenching tool and M1938 gasmask canisters are visible. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 101I-617-2571-04/ Ollig/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)



About 20 Panzergrenadiers of the Grossdeutschland Div ride a StuG III of the divisional assault-gun battalion towards the front line at Kursk, July 1943 – the last (and unsuccessful) great German armoured offensive in the East. They are wearing standard infantry field uniforms, on which the divisional cuff title can be made out under magnification. The just-visible 'trident' radio antenna (left) suggests that this gun belongs to a sub-unit headquarters. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J14778/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

was motorized, with I Bn (1st–4th Cos), II Bn (5th–8th Cos), III Bn (9th–12th Cos), and IV Bn with three Cos (13th Lt IG, 14th AT, 15th Hvy IG), plus, from 10 April 1940, 16th SP Assault Gun Battery.

Expansion, 1940–41

No more motorized infantry divs were formed before the Western Blitzkrieg of April–June 1940. All six formations took part in that campaign: 29th Div and GD Regt in Luxembourg (April); 20th Div in Belgium (May); 2nd, 13th, 20th and 29th Div and GD Regt in France (May–June).

The branch was expanded during August–November 1940 in parallel with the increase in Panzer Divisions. The 2nd & 13th Mot Inf Divs were converted to 12th & 13th Pz Divs in October 1940. The 20th & 29th were supplemented by motorizing eight Inf Divs: 16th & 60th (August 1940); 3rd & 14th (October 1940); and 10th, 18th, 25th & 36th (November 1940). All Mot Inf Divs had two Mot Inf Regiments. By September 1940, GD Mot Inf Regt had received 17th M'cycle, 18th Engr, 19th Sigs and 20th AA Cos, and I–III Bns each received a Hvy Wpns Company.

G

WESTERN FRONT, 1944

(1) *Hauptfeldwebel*, 901st Panzer Instruction Regt; Caen, June 1944

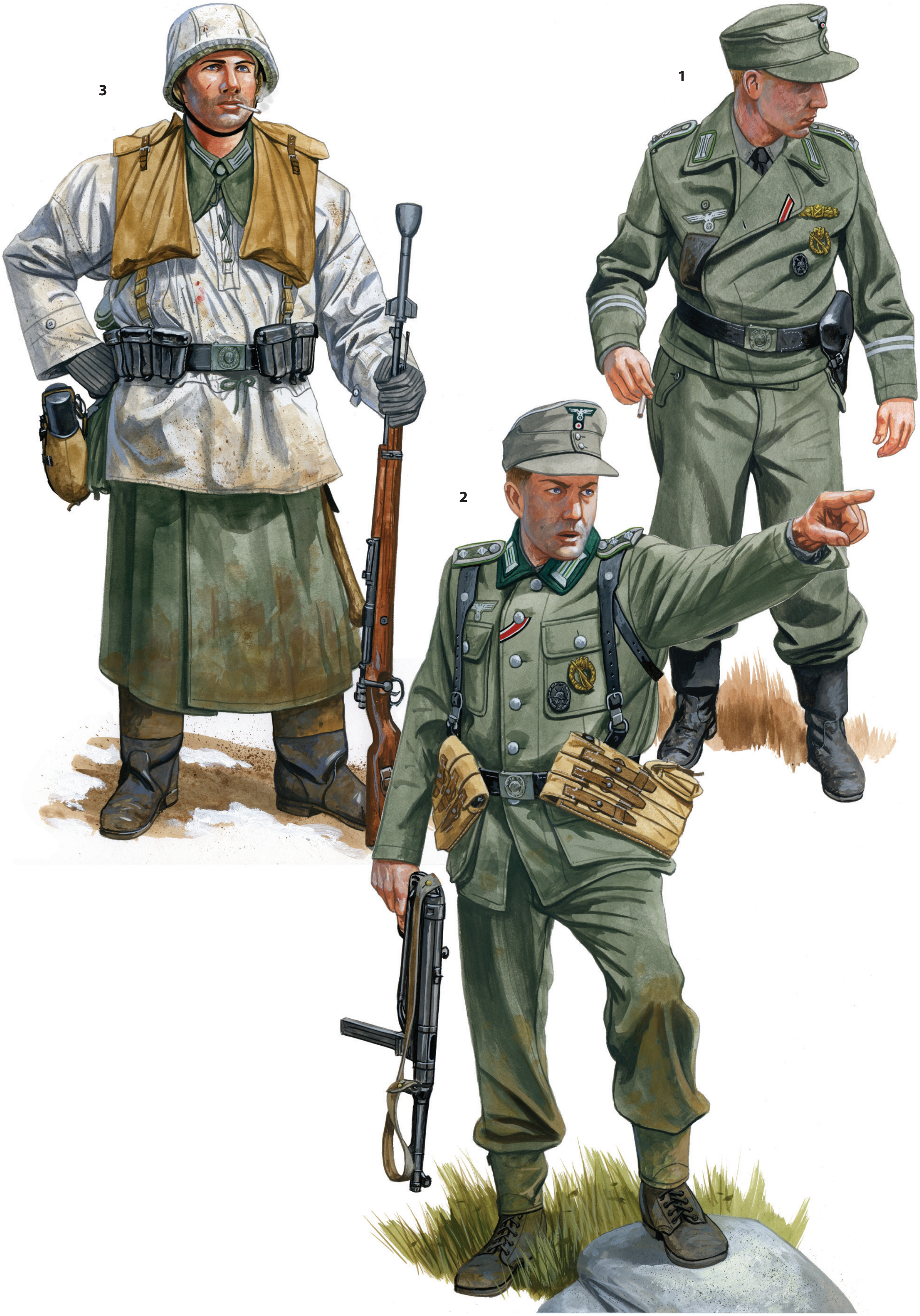
This senior company NCO in the elite 130th Panzer Lehr-Div wears the M1943 field cap and M1940 field-grey special field uniform. His jacket, with his report book wedged in the front, has field-grey collar patches piped meadow-green, as are the shoulder straps with his *Feldwebel* rank, and the two (unofficially retained) silver 'L' badges for Lehr; the two mouse-grey cuff rings mark his appointment as company *Hauptfeldwebel*. His awards include the M1942 Close Combat Clasp.

(2) *Oberfähnrich*, 11th Panzergrenadier Regt; Arnhem, Netherlands, October 1944

This probationary second lieutenant from 9th Pz Div wears an officers' M1943 field cap, with aluminium wire crown piping and insignia on a T-shaped dark green backing. The enlisted ranks' M1943 field tunic has an added dark green collar and officers' M1935 collar patches with meadow-green pipings on the braids. However, he wears the *Oberfeldwebel* shoulder straps of his substantive rank, and an M1940 enlisted ranks' mouse-grey thread breast eagle. His platoon leader's equipment is conventional.

(3) *Gefreiter*, 104th Panzergrenadier Regt; Bastogne, Belgium, December 1944

This 15th PzGren Div soldier shows the white sides of the reversible camouflage M1942 *Tarnhelmüberzug* and first-pattern *Tarnhemd*. The thin smock is pulled on over an M1942 greatcoat, of which the large field-grey collar is exposed, as is that of the M1941 tunic underneath. Note that he has also received large black leather snow-boots with brown felt calves. He wears rifleman's field equipment, and M1944 grenade bags around his neck carry obsolescent and ineffective 6.1cm GG/P40 anti-tank grenades, fired by means of a spigot discharger on his Kar98k rifle.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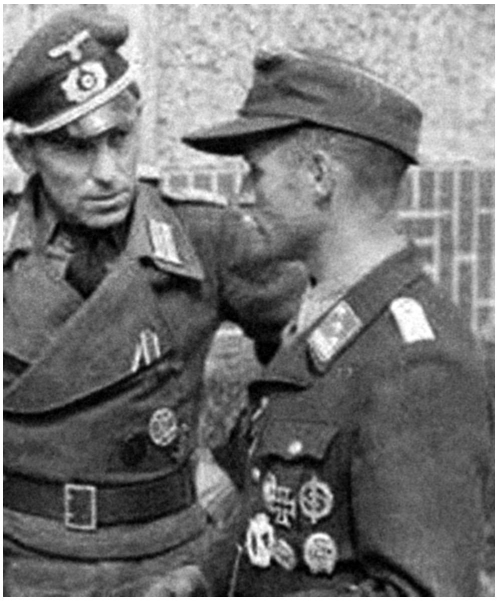


An officer (left) of the Feldherrnhalle Grenadier Regt – probably a former SA member – in discussion with an *SA-Hauptsturmführer* of the FHH Sturmabteilung Regt in southern France, autumn 1943. The former wears the M1940 field-grey special field uniform; the M1935 officers' collar patches would have white central pipings on the braids, and the M1940 field shoulder straps with white underlay would bear a gilt FHH badge of a circled SA monogram set on 'battle' or 'wolf-hook' runes. He displays buttonhole-ribbons of the Iron Cross 2nd Class and the Russian Winter 1941/42 medal, a black Wound Badge, a bronze M1935 SA Military Defence Badge, and the M1940 Motorized Infantry Assault Badge. The SA captain (right) wears a brown field cap and service tunic, with rank insignia on crimson collar patches and M1939 shoulder straps. His awards – Iron Cross in both classes, Infantry Assault Badge and a silver Wound Badge, in addition to the SA Military Defence and National Sports badges – suggest his own previous service with the Army's Feldherrnhalle Regiment. (Author's collection)

The 16th Mot Inf Div joined the garrison in western France in December 1940, and 60th joined the military mission to Romania in January 1941. Three formations served in the Yugoslav campaign of April 1941: 16th Div in Bosnia, 60th Div and GD Regt in Serbia. The 125th Inf Regt was motorized (but never so designated) in spring 1941, and fought in Greece.

Eastern Front, 1941–42

An *Infanterie-Division (mot.) 41 (I)*, introduced 10 February 1941, increased its firepower over the M1939 organization, and comprised three Mot Inf Regts with supporting services. A Regt had a Regt HQ Co with three ptns (m'cycle, sigs, and engr, each 3x LMGs); and 14 cos in three Mot Inf Battalions. I Bn had an HQ with a light supply column (later abolished) and a m'cyle ptn (3x LMGs); 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 12x LMGs, 3x 5cm mtrs); and 4th Hvy Wpns Co (12x HMGs, 6x 8cm mortars). II Bn had the same organization in 5th–8th Cos, III Bn the same in 9th–12th Cos; plus 13th AT Co (12x 3.7cm PaK 36 guns, 4x LMGs), and 14th Hvy IG Co (2x 15cm, 6x 7.5cm guns).

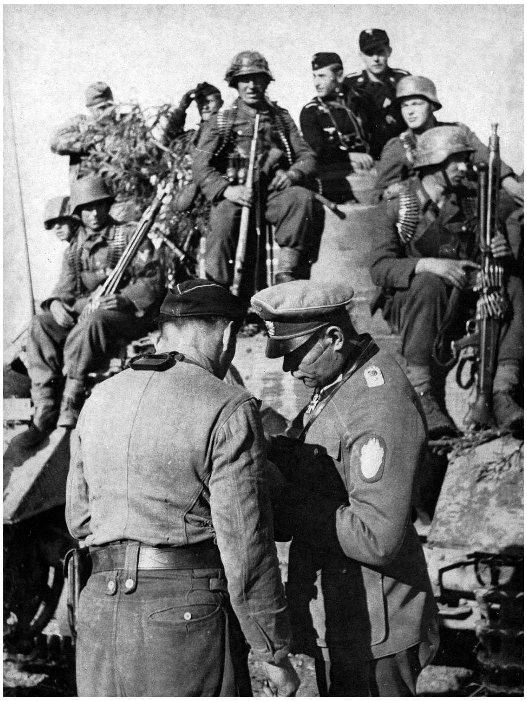
All ten Mot Inf Divs fought in the Soviet Union, June–December 1941: five (3, 10, 18, 20 & 36) in Army Group North in the Baltic states and northern Russia; six (10, 14, 20, 25, 29, 36, plus GD Regt) in Army Group Centre in Belarus and central Russia; and four (10, 16, 25 & 60) in Army Group South in Ukraine and southern Russia.

An *Infanterie-Division (mot.) 41 (II)*, introduced 16 May 1941, also had three Mot Inf Regiments. A Regt now had an HQ Co with four ptns (sigs; AT, with 3x 5cm PaK 38, 3x LMGs; m'cycle, 6x LMGs; engr, 3x LMGs); and 14 cos in three Mot Inf Battalions. I Bn had a Bn HQ with a m'cyle ptn, 3x LMGs; 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 18x LMGs, 3x PzBu 39 AT rifles, 1x 2.8cm PzBu hvy AT rifle, 3x 5cm mtrs); and 4th Hvy Wpns Co (12x HMGs, 3x 3.7cm PaK 36 AT guns, 6x 8cm mortars). II Bn had the same organization in 5th–8th Cos, III Bn the same in 9th–12th Cos; plus 13th AT Co (12x 3.7cm PaK 36, 4x LMGs), and 14th Hvy IG Co (12x HMGs, 6x 7.5cm guns).

On 12 March 1942 the Grossdeutschland Mot Inf Regt was expanded to form a Mot Inf Div with a Pz Bn, supporting services, and two Mot Inf Regts: 1st GD Inf Regt, formed 12 April 1942 (1 October 1942, GD Grenadier Regt); and 2nd GD Inf Regt, formed 20 March 1942 (1 October 1942, GD Fusilier Regiment). Both had the same organization of 18 cos in I–IV Battalions. I Bn: 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 18x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs, 2x flamethrowers); 4th MG Co (12x HMGs, 6x 8cm mtrs); 5th Hvy Wpns Co (engr ptn, 3x LMGs; IG section, 2x 7.5cm, 1x LMG). II Bn had the same organization in 6th–10th Cos, III Bn in 11th–15th Companies. IV Bn had 16th SP AA Co (8x 2cm, 2 x quad-2cm); 17th Hvy IG Co (6x 7.5cm, 2x 15cm); and 18th SP AT Co (with 9x 7.5cm, 6x LMGs).

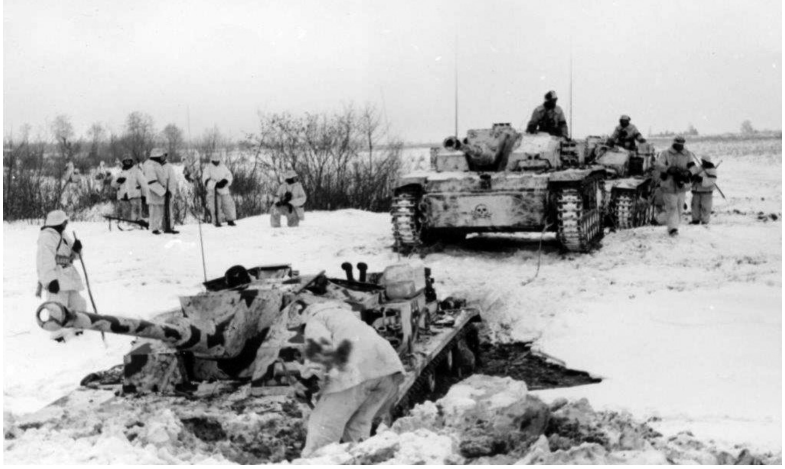
Four more divisions were formed in 1942, but only saw action in 1943: 179th Mot Div (April 1942) &155th (May 1942); 345th & 386th Mot Inf Divs (November 1942). To improve morale all Inf Regts were given the historically prestigious title of Grenadier Regts on 15 October 1942, and Mot Inf Regts became Mot Gren Regts – singular, *Grenadier-Regiment (mot.)*. However the Mot Inf Divs retained that title until May 1943.

The 11 active Mot Inf Divs continued fighting on the Eastern Front in 1942: three (10, 18 & 20) in northern Russia; five (3, 14, 25, 36 & GD) in Belarus and central Russia; and four (3, 16, 29 & 60) in southern Russia and the Caucasus.



Romania, July 1944: the scar-faced *Oberst* Karl Lorenz (right foreground), commanding the Grossdeutschland PzGren Regt, confers with a Panzer officer as tank crewmen and two Panzergrenadier MG42 teams sit waiting on a tank, probably a Panther. Lorenz wears an M1934 'old style' field cap, and note the M1943 Demjansk Shield campaign decoration on the left sleeve of his tunic. His companion wears a silver-piped M1935 black Panzer field cap, M1935 grey tank shirt, and the M1940 'self-supporting' trousers of the special field-grey field uniform. (Tchakov Collection)

Lithuania, 31 August 1944: an armoured company of I Bn/ Grossdeutschland PzFus Regt counter-attack through a cornfield in SdKfz 251 halftracks supported by motorcyclists. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-J27512/ CC-BY-SA 3.012)



December 1944: four late-model 7.5cm SP assault guns set off across the snowy landscape of the Belgian Ardennes. They are watched in the background by Panzergrenadiers wearing M1942 reversible padded winter uniforms; under magnification, some can be seen to wear dark field-sign armlets around their right sleeves. The second StuG has a black outline death's-head badge centred on the whitewashed front hull plate. (Nik Cornish at www.Stavka.org.uk)

Reorganization, 1943

Three Mot Inf Divs (3, 29·& 60) were destroyed at Stalingrad by February 1943. The 3rd & 29th were reformed in western France, March 1943, by absorbing 386th & 345th Divs, and 60th reformed in southern France, 17 February 1943. Meanwhile 155th & 179th Mot Inf Divs reformed as Panzer Divs on 5 April 1943. During May–July 1943, nine Mot Inf Divs (3, 10, 16, 18, 20, 25, 29, 60 & GD) were reformed as Panzergrenadier Divs, but their component regiments continued to be termed Mot Gren Regts until 1 December 1944, when they were retitled Pz Gren Regiments.

FIELD UNIFORMS & INSIGNIA

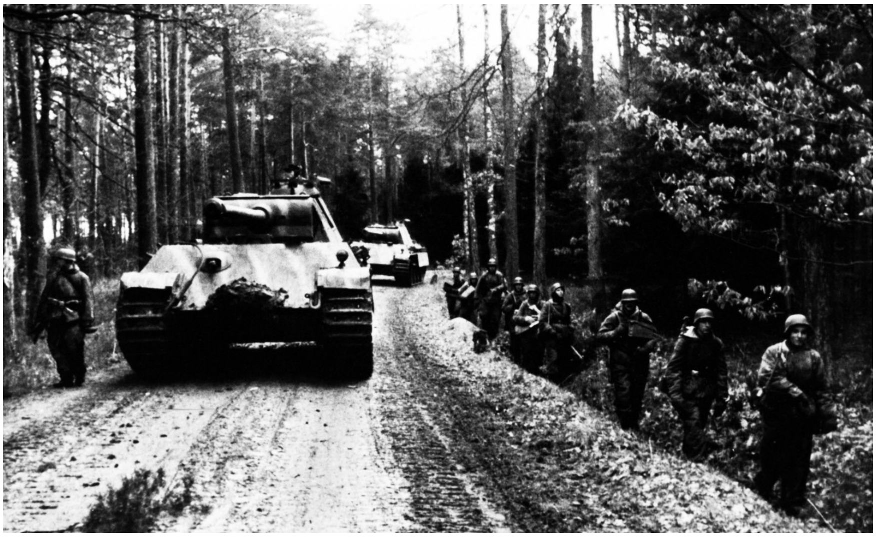
Refer to 'Infantry in Panzer Divisions, 1935–45' (above), except for the following.

Ranks

The lowest two ranks varied according to the branch of service:
Oberschütze/Schütze (Mot Inf, 12 October 1937)
Obergrenadier/Grenadier (GD Grenadier Regt, 1 October 1942; Mot Grenadier Regts, 15 October 1942)
Oberfüsilier/Füsilier (GD Fusilier Regt, 1 October 1942)

Branch & unit insignia

Motorized Inf and Mot Gren Regts wore white Infantry branch-colour and Regt numbers from 12 October 1937.



Silesia, south-east Germany, January 1945: two PzKw V Panther tanks advance along a forest road, flanked in the ditch by Panzergrenadiers wearing reversible winter uniforms camouflage-side out. (Tchakov Collection)

Table 5: Panzergrenadiers in Panzergrenadier Divisions (in chronogical order of formation, 23 June 1943–31 Jan 1945)

15 PzGren Div (14.5.1943 from Sizilien Div), Gren Regts Sizilien 1–3, Sicily; PzGren Regts 104, 115, 129 (15.7.1943); S. Italy (10.1943); PzGren Regts 104, 115 (4.1944); S. France (8.1944); E. France (9.1944); Battle of the Bulge, Belgium (12.1944); W. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

Großdeutschland PzGren Div (formed 19.5.1943 from GD Mot Inf Div, GD Gren Regt, GD Fusilier Regt; GD PzGren Regt, GD PzFus Regt (6.1943) Ukraine; Kursk (7–8.1943); Romania (4.1944); Lithuania (8.1944); GD PzGren Regt, Panzer Musketeer Regt, PzFus Regt, E. Germany (1.1945); surrendered (8.5.1945).

Feldherrnhalle PzGren Div (formed 20.6.1943 from 60 Mot Inf Div), Gren Regt FHH, Fusilier Regt FHH, S. France; N. France (11.1943); Belarus (1.1944); N. Russia (2.1944); Belarus (5.1944); destroyed (7.1944); reformed (9.1944); Hungary (10.1944); 1 FHH Panzer Div (27.11.1944).

3 PzGren Div (23.6.1943 from 3 Mot Inf. Div), E. France; N. Italy (7.1943); E. France (8.1944); Battle of Bulge, Belgium (12.1944); PzGren Regts 8, 29 (1.12.1944); W. Germany (4.1945); destroyed Ruhr (14.4.1945).

10 PzGren Div (23.6.1943 from 10 Mot Inf Div), C. Russia; Ukraine (9.1943); destroyed Romania (8.1944); reformed Generalgouvernement (15.10.1944); PzGren Regts 20, 41 (1.12.1944); E. Germany (2.1945); surrendered Bohemia-Moravia (5.1945).

16 PzGren Div (23.6.1943 from 16 Mot Inf Div), Gren Regt (mot) 60, 156, S. Russia; 116 Panzer Div (28. 3.1944).

18 PzGren Div (23.6.1943 from 18 Mot Inf Div), N. Russia (6.1943); C. Russia (8.1943); Belarus (10.1943); destroyed (6.1944); reformed (2.12.1944), PzGren Regts 30, 51, E. Germany; surrendered N. Germany (4.1945).

25 PzGren Div (23.6.1943 from 25 Mot Inf Div), C. Russia; Belarus (11.1943); destroyed (7.1944); reformed with PzGren Regts 35, 119 (20. 9.1944); W. Germany (12.1944); E. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

29 PzGren Div (23.6.1943 from 29 Mot Inf Div), France; Sicily (7.1943); S. Italy (1.1944); N. Italy (11.1944); PzGren Regts 15, 71 (1.12.1944); surrendered (4.1945).

90 PzGren Div (6.7.1943 from Sardinien Div), PzGren Regts 155, 200, 361, Sardinia; Corsica (8.1943); PzGren Regts 200, 361, N. Italy (10.1943); surrendered (4.1945).

20 PzGren Div (23.7.1943 from 20 Mot Inf Div), C. Russia; Ukraine (10.1943); Generalgouvernement (8.1944); PzGren Regts 76, 90 (1.12.1944); E. Germany (2.1945); surrendered (4.1945).

Brandenburg PzGren Div (formed 15.9.1944 from Brandenburg Div, formed 1.4.1943; Regts 1–4, 5 Instruction, various locations); Brandenburg Mot Lt Inf Regts 1, 2 (10.1944) (Lithuania); 1, 2 Brandenburg Pz Lt Inf Regts (20.12.1944), E. Germany (1.1945); surrendered (8.5.1945).

Führer Escort Div (formed 26.1.1945 from Führer Escort Bde), PzGren Regts 100, 102; Ardennes (1.1945); E. Germany (2.1945); Silesia (3.1945); Führer PzGren Regt 1, Vienna (4.1945); surrendered Austria (5.1945).

Führer Gren Div (formed 26.1.1945 from Führer Gren Bde), PzGren Regt 99; Ardennes (1.1945); E. Germany (2.1945); Silesia (3.1945); Führer PzGren Regts 3, 4 (16.3.1945); surrendered (5.1945).

Kurmark PzGren Div (formed 31.1.1945 from PzGren Repl Bde Grossdeutschland), PzGren Regt Kurmark, Pz Füsilier Regt Kurmark; E. Germany (4.1945).

The GD Mot Regt wore white branch-colour and a 'GD' monogram from 1 October 1939. 1st GD Mot Regt, formed 12 April 1942, wore 'GD' over '1' on their shoulder straps; when redesignated GD Grenadier Regt on 1 October 1942, the number was replaced with white cloth loops above and below the 'GD' monogram. 2nd GD Mot Regt, formed 20 March 1942, wore 'GD' over '2'; when redesignated GD Fusilier Regt on 1 October 1942 they adopted red cloth loops. Some general officers in GD formations unofficially wore a bright aluminium 'GD' monogram on their shoulder straps.

As members of an elite formation GD personnel wore a cuff title on their right forearm. The first pattern (20 June 1939) was a 32mm-wide dark green cuffband with a machine-woven Gothic script 'Großdeutschland' title in aluminium thread, and 3mm 'Russia braid' inset edging. The second pattern, briefly worn in summer 1940, modified the title to 'Inf.-Regt. Großdeutschland'. Proving unpopular, it was replaced 7 October 1940 by the third pattern, a black 'doeskin' cloth cuffband with a hand-embroidered aluminium thread 'Großdeutschland' in medieval Sütterlin script.

INFANTRY IN PANZERGRENADIER DIVISIONS, 1943–45

Fifteen Panzergrenadier Divs were active between 23 June 1943 and 8 May 1945, numbered/named 3, 10, 15, 16, 18, 20, 25, 29, 90, Brandenburg, Feldherrnhalle (FHH), Führer Escort (FB – in German, *Begleit*), Führer Grenadier (FG), Grossdeutschland, and Kurmark. They were mainly organized from Mot Inf Divs (see above), each with two Mot Gren Regts (initially, three in 15th & 90th Pz Gren Divisions). Note, however, that it was not until 1 December 1944 that Mot Gren Regts were officially redesignated as Pz Gren Regiments.

Reorganization, 1943

Panzergrenadier Regiments had existed since July 1942 as the mechanized and motorized infantry component of Panzer Divs, but it was not until May 1943 that 11 PzGren Divs were formed. Of the 11 Mot Inf Divs then in existence, two (36 & 14) reverted to dismounted Inf Divs in May and June 1943 respectively, and the other nine were reorganized as Panzergrenadier Divisions. Seven – 3rd, 10th, 16th, 18th, 25th, 29th (May 1943), and 20th (July 1943) – now each had two Mot Gren/Pz Gren Regts and a Panzer Battalion. The 15th PzGren Div was formed May 1943 with Sicily garrison troops, and 90th PzGren Div that July from the Sardinia garrison; these formations commemorated 15th Pz and 90th (Light) Africa Divs, lost in Tunisia in May 1943. Each would have three Mot Gren Regts and a Pz Bn, according to the *Panzergrenadier-Division 43* structure introduced 24 September 1943. As elite formations, the GD and FHH Divs received enhanced tables of organization.

The *Panzergrenadier-Division 43* organization had a Div HQ, two Mot Gren/PzGren Regts, a Pz Bn, and motorized supporting services. A PzGren Regt had a Regt HQ; an HQ Co with a sigs ptn and an AT ptn (3x 7.5cm, 3x LMGs), and I–III Battalions. I Bn had 1st–3rd Rifle Cos (each 18x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs), and 4th Hvy Wpns Co (ptn 3x 7.5cm AT, ptn 4x 12cm hvy mortars). II and III Bns had the same organization with 5th–8th Cos and 9th–12th Cos respectively. The support cos were 13th AA (12x 2cm), 14th Inf Support (2x 15cm IGs, 4x 7.5cm IGs, 4x LMGs), and 15th Engr (three ptns, each 4x LMGs, 6x flamethrowers).

The **Grossdeutschland PzGren Div** was reorganized May 1943 with a three-bn Pz Regt, supporting services, and two mot inf regts – GD Grenadier Regt and GD Fusilier Regiment. Both had the same organization, of 18 cos in I–IV Battalions. I (Armoured) Bn had 1st–3rd PzGren Cos (each 34x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs); 4th Hvy PzGren Co with three ptns: HQ (2x LMGs); Mtr (2x LMGs, 4x 12cm hvy mtrs); and Lt IG (4x LMGs, 6 x 7.5cm

H

GERMANY, 1945

(1) *Panzergrenadier*, Führer-Panzergrenadier Regt; Vienna, April 1945

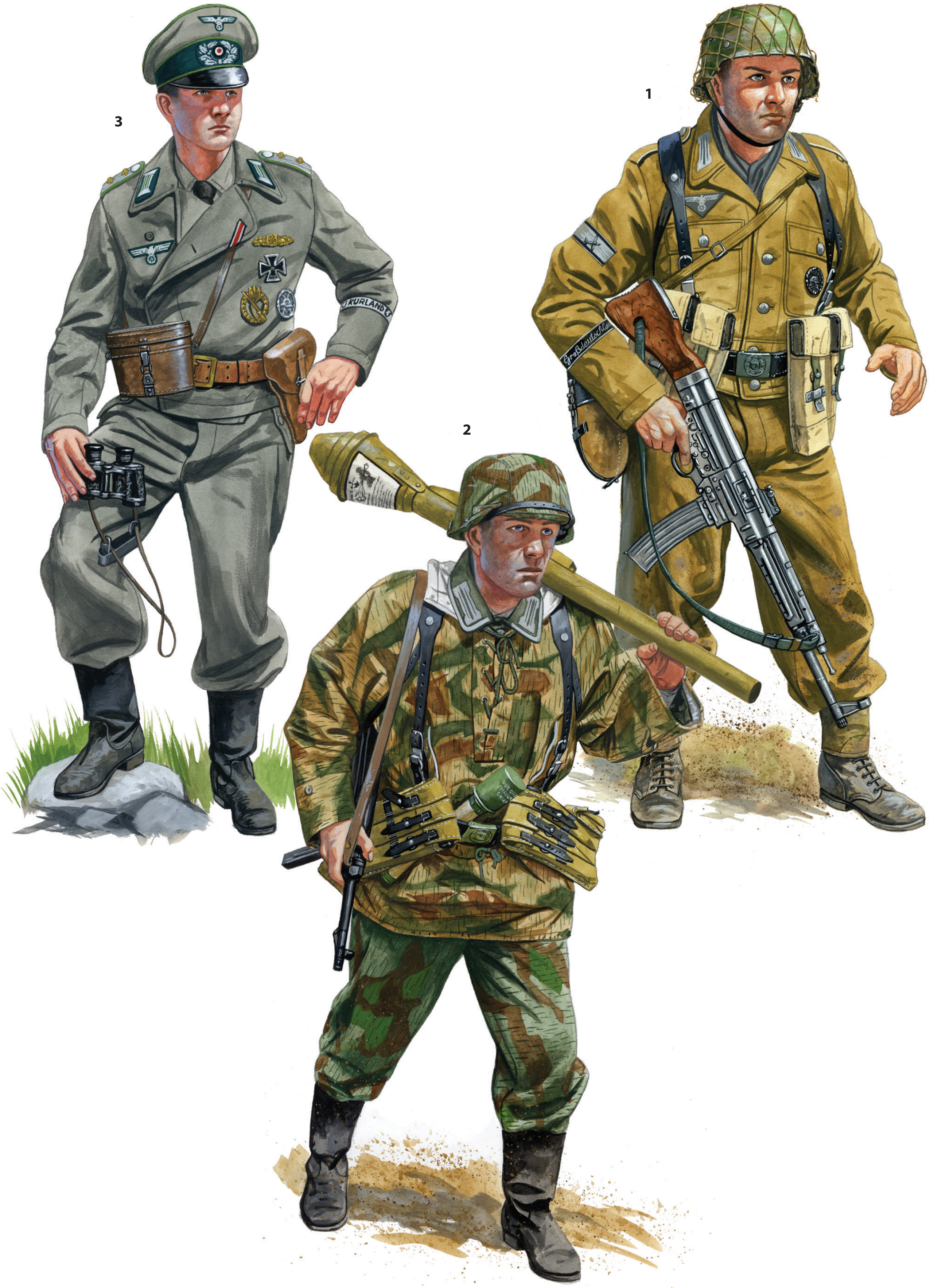
This infantryman wears an M1942 helmet factory-finished in slate-grey, with hand-painted green and light khaki blotches and a brown string camouflage net, and the greenish-brown M1944 field uniform. The waist-length blouse was produced with M1940 collar braids and a breast-eagle on a triangular backing, and the plain shoulder straps have Infantry-white piping. His distinctions are a black Wound Badge, an M1945 Aircraft Destruction Badge, and the M1944 fourth-pattern 'Großdeutschland' cuff title to which the FG Div was entitled. His trousers are confined by M1940 canvas anklets above M1934 black ankle-boots. His weapon is the Sturmgewehr 44, and he has two sets of triple canvas pouches for its curved magazines.

(2) *Unteroffizier*, 101st Panzergrenadier Regt; Berlin, April 1945

This NCO from the remnant of 18th PzGren Div wears a 'splinter'-pattern helmet cover and field-made overtrousers tailored from shelter-quarter cloth, with a second-pattern reversible white/camouflage hooded smock. The collar of his M1943 tunic shows M1940 braids and NCOs' mouse-grey edging. He still has 'short-shaft' marching boots, and wears a section leader's equipment. In addition to his MP40 and a Stielhandgranate 24 he carries a Panzerfaust 100 anti-tank projector.

(3) *Hauptmann*, 25th Panzergrenadier Regt; Liepaja, Latvia, May 1945

This battalion CO from the trapped 12th Pz Div still wears the officers' M1934 'old style' field cap with meadow-green piping, and white-embroidered eagle, cockade and wreath on dark green backings. His M1940 field-grey special uniform jacket has conventional M1935 insignia and M1940 field shoulder straps with meadow-green branch distinctions; note on his left sleeve the M1944 'Kurland' campaign cuff title.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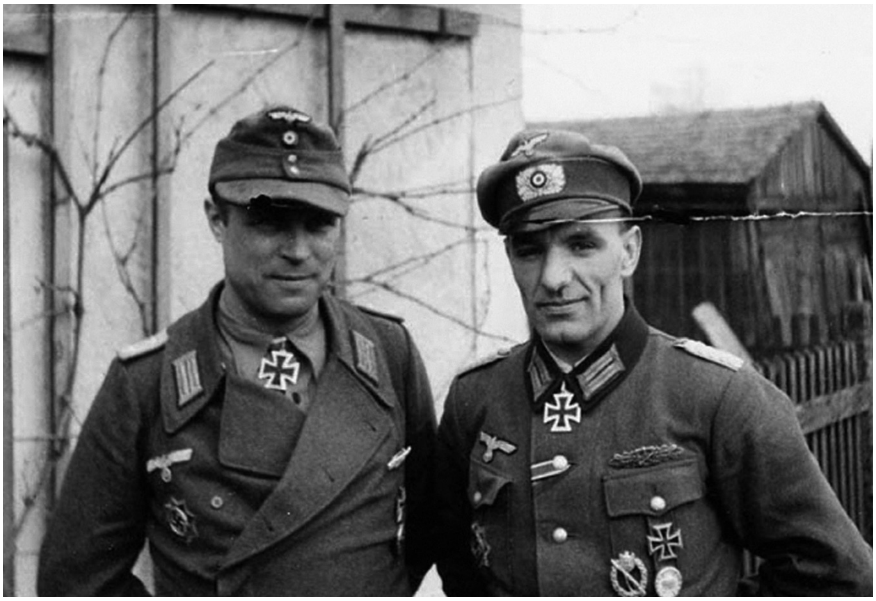
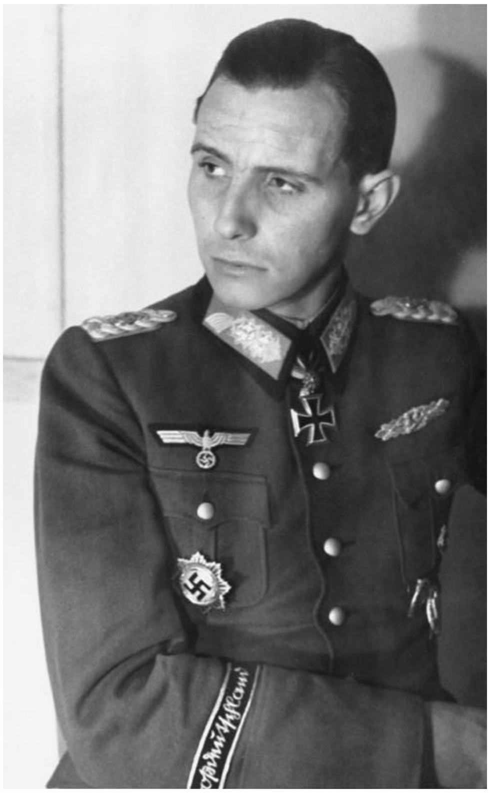


Two Panzergrenadier officers decorated with the Knight's Cross, photographed in August 1944. The *Hauptmann* (left) wears an M1943 field cap and M1940 field-grey special field uniform; his jacket has M1940 shoulder straps and M1935 collar patches with meadow-green *Waffenfarbe* distinctions, and he shows awards of the German Cross, Close Combat Clasp, Iron Cross 1st Class and silver Wound Badge. His companion, *Major* Johannes Grimminger, wears an M1934 'old style' field cap and M1935 field tunic; he shows the same awards, plus the Motorized Infantry Assault Badge. (Tchakov Collection)

guns). II (Motorized) Bn had 5th–7th PzGren Cos (each 34x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs); 8th MG Co (12x HMGs, 6x 8cm mtrs); and 9th Hvy Wpns Co (engr ptn, 3x LMGs; AT ptn, 3x 5cm PaK 38; IG sect, 2x 7.5cm). III (Motorized) Bn had the same organization in 10th–14th Companies. IV Self-Propelled Hvy Bn had 15th LAA Co (12x 2cm, 4x LMGs); 16th Hvy IG Co (8x 15cm, 3x LMGs); and 17th Hvy AT Co (9x 7.5cm Pak 40, 9x LMGs).

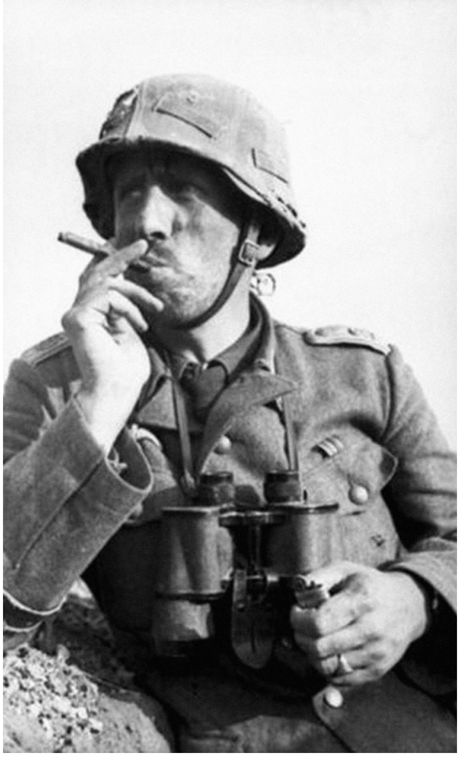
The **Feldherrnhalle PzGren Div** was organized from the reforming 60th Div as an elite formation commemorating the Sturmabteilung (SA) Nazi paramilitary organization. It was organized into two PzGren Regts, a Panzer Bn, and supporting services. The FHH Grenadier Regt, formed 20 June 1943, had three battalions. I Bn had 1st–4th PzGren (Fusilier) Cos (each 18x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 3x PzBu 39 AT rifles, 2x 8cm. mortars). II Bn had the same organization with 5th–8th PzGren Cos, III Bn with 9th–12th. Regimental support elements were 13th SP Hvy IG Co (6x 15cm), and 14th AT Co (3x 7.5cm PaK 40, 6x 5cm PaK 36, 9x LMGs). The FHH Fusilier Regt, formed 26 June 1943, had the same organization.



Otto-Ernst Remer, now promoted *Generalmajor* and commander of the Führer Escort Div on 31 January 1945. He wears general officer's uniform with the silver 'GD' shoulder strap monogram permitted for this division, but also the third-pattern 'Großdeutschland' cuff title. (Bundesarchiv, Bild 183-2004-0330-500/ Unknown/ CC-BY-SA 3.0)

The following seven **armoured** (halftrack-mounted) PzGren Bns and two independent PzGren Cos are believed to have existed, within the following PzGren Divs (Arabic/ = co of regt; Roman/ = bn of regt): *3rd PzGren Div* (1/8); *10th PzGren Div* (1/20); *25th PzGren Div* (I/119); *Brandenburg PzGren Div* (I/1st Lt Inf); *FHH PzGren Div* (I/Gren); *GD PzGren Div* (I/PzGren, I/PzFus); *FB Div* (I/100); *FG Div* (I/99).

The 11 PzGren Divs were deployed as follows in 1943: two (3, FHH) in France; one (90), Sardinia and Corsica; three (3, 15 & 29), southern Italy; one (18), northern Russia; four (10, 18, 20 & 25), central Russia and Belarus; and four (GD, 10, 16 & 20), Ukraine.



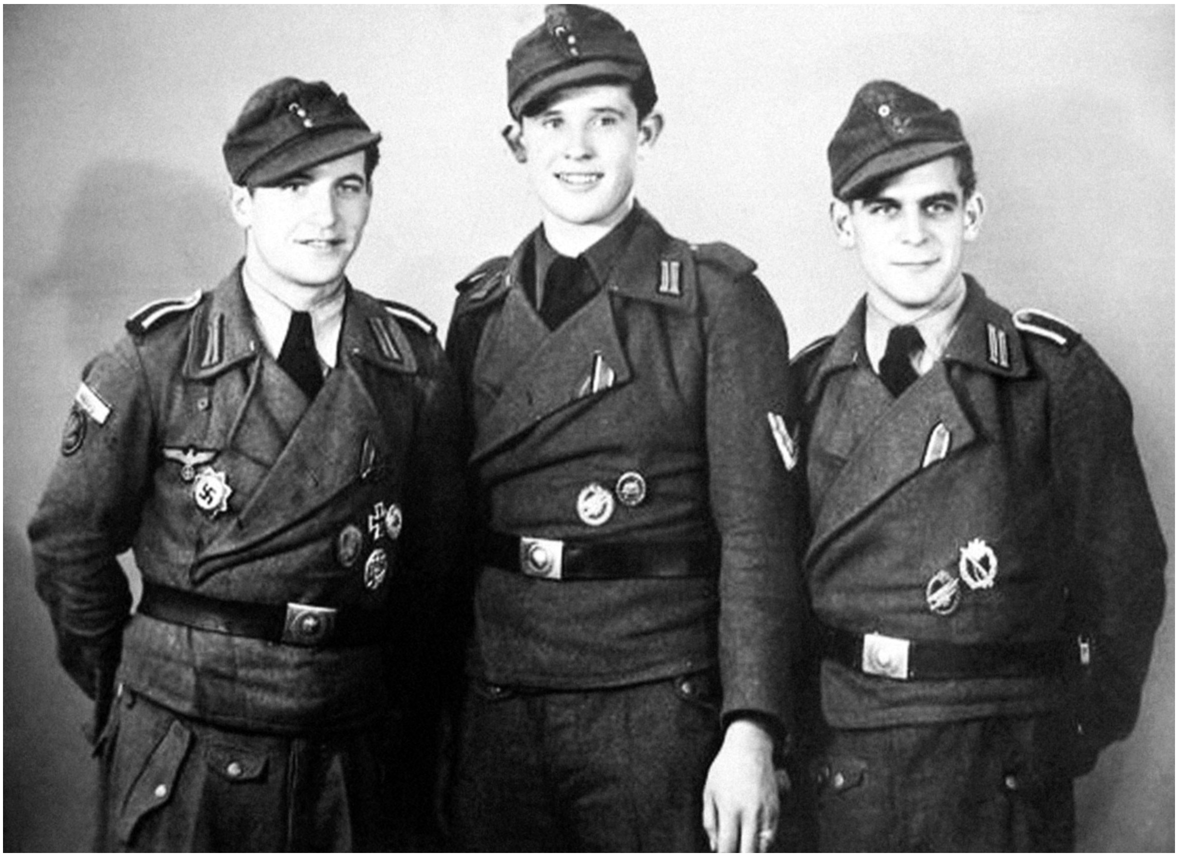
A *Hauptmann* from the short-lived Kurmark PzGren Regt calmly smokes a cigar in the front line near Frankfurt-am-der-Oder, March 1945. He wears a camouflage helmet cover with foliage loops, and his field-grey M1943 enlisted ranks' field tunic bears M1940 shoulder straps, and probably M1935 collar patches, with meadow-green distinctions. Just visible is a 'Großdeutschland' cuff title. Grossdeutschland ('Greater Germany') described the expanded Germany of World War II, while 'Kurmark' commemorated the modest 12th-century beginnings of the German state. (Author's collection)

Retreat, 1944

Since December 1939 the Brandenburg Unit had carried out daring commando operations directed by Wehrmacht Intelligence (Abwehr). After Hitler, suspicious of the Abwehr's loyalty, turned it over to the SS Intelligence branch (Sicherheitsdienst), the Brandenburg organization restructured on 15 September 1944 as a line formation, the **Brandenburg Panzergrenadier Division.**

The Brandenburg Div comprised two Mot Lt Inf Regts (sing., *Jägerregiment (mot.)*), from 20 December 1944 Pz Lt Inf Regts (*Panzerjägerregiment*), plus a two-bn Panzer Regt, and supporting services. 1st Mot Lt Inf Regt had a Regt HQ Co with three ptns (HQ, 2x LMGs; sigs, 7x LMGs; m'cycle, 6x LMGs). Its I (Armd) Bn had an HQ (6x LMGs) and a supply co (5x LMGs); 1st–3rd Mot Lt Inf Cos (each 30x LMGs, 4x HMGs, 2cm and 2x 7.5cm); 4th Hvy Wpns Co with three ptns (HQ, 2x LMGs; Mtr, 2x LMGs, 4x 12cm hvy mtrs; Lt IG, 4x LMGs, 6x 7.5cm guns). II (Mot) Bn had an HQ, and supply co (4x LMGs); 1st–3rd Mot Lt Iaf (each 12x LMGs); and 4th Hvy Wpns Co (4x 12cm hvy, 8x 8cm mortars). Support elements were 9th SP Hvy IG Co (8x 15cm); 10th Engr Co, with four armd ptns (1st, 6x flamethrowers, 6x LMGs; 2nd, 6x flamethrowers, 12x LMGs; 3rd, 12x flamethrowers, 8x LMGs; 4th, 2x HMGs, 2x 8cm mortars). 2nd Mot Lt Inf Regt had I & II Mot Bns organized like II/1st Regiment.

The *Panzergrenadier-Division 44* organization, introduced 1 August 1944, had a Div HQ, two PzGren Regts, a Panzer Bn, and motorized supporting services. A PzGren Regt had a Regt HQ and HQ Co with three ptns (sigs; AT, 3x 7.5cm, 3x LMGs; and m'cycle, 6x LMGs), and I–III Mot Battalions. I Bn had an HQ with supply co (4x LMGs); 1st–3rd PzGren Cos (each 4x HMGs, 18x LMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs); and 4th Hvy Wpns Co (AA ptn, 6x 2cm; Hvy Mtr, 4x 12cm mortars). II & III Bns had the same organization



Three young Panzergrenadiers from a Motorized Light Infantry Regt *(Jägerregiment (mot.))* of the Brandenburg Division, wearing M1943 field caps and M1940 field-grey special field uniforms; note pockets of the 'self-supporting' trousers, introduced in 1943. The left-hand *Unteroffizier*, decorated with the German Cross, shows the oval M1942 Jäger badge on his right upper sleeve, below an M1942 Tank Destruction Badge, but none of these men have (or perhaps they prefer to conceal?) a 'Brandenburg' cuff title on the right forearm. The variety of ribbons, awards and assault badges they display emphasize the quality of the 'Brandenburgers', and all of them, unusually for soldiers, have earned the Luftwaffe's M1936 Paratrooper's Badge. (Author's collection)

with 5th–8th Cos and 9th–12th Cos respectively. There were also 13th Hvy IG Co (4x 15cm), and 14th Engr (2x HMGs, 12x LMGs, 2x 8cm mtrs, 18x flamethrowers).

As the German Army retreated on all fronts the 12 PzGren Divs were continuously deployed in 1944 to plug holes in the line. Two (FHH & 18) served in N. Russia; two (GD & Brandenburg) in Lithuania; four (FHH, Brandenburg, 18 & 25) in Belarus; three (GD, 10 & 16) in Ukraine; two (10 & 20) in Poland; two (GD & 10) in Romania; one (FHH) in Hungary; four (3, 15, 29 & 90) in Italy; one (15) in S. France; two (3 & 15) in E. France; and two (3 & 15) in Belgium (Battle of the Bulge). During 1944, four PzGren Divs were destroyed but reformed (3, 10, 18 & 25). 16th PzGren Div was converted to 116th Pz Div, 8 March 1944, and PzGren Div Feldherrnhalle to a Panzer Div, 27 November 1944.

1945: the final months

Three final and elite PzGren Divs were formed in January 1945: the **Führer Escort Div** (in German, *Führer-Begleit-Division*); the **Führer Grenadier Div**; and the **Kurmark PzGren Division**. All three were considered as Grossdeutschland formations.

The Führer Escort Bn was formed 29 September 1939 from the Führer Escort Command, with personnel from the GD Infantry Regiment. In July 1944 that unit became I Bn/Führer Grenadier Brigade, and in September 1944 the Führer Escort Brigade (with I & II PzGren Bns and supporting services). Expanded 26 January 1945 to become the Führer Escort Div, it

Table 6: Rifles & Panzergenadier branch & unit insignia, 12 Sept 1935–8 May 1945

Units	*Unit designations*	*In existence*	*Shoulder straps*	*branch-colour*
Panzer Divisions:				
6x Rifle Bde HQs	1–6	12.9.1935–28.9.1939	-	Pink
23x Rifle Bde HQs	1–20, 22–24	12.9.1939–11.8.1942	-	Meadow green (or kept pink)
24x PzGren Bde HQs	1–20, 22–24, 26	5.7.1942–26.1.1945	-	Meadow green
6x Rifle Regts	1–3, 12–14	15.10.1935–28.9.1939	Gothic S/Regt no.	Pink
48x Rifle Regts	21, 25, 26, 28, 33, 40, 52, 59, 63, 64, 66, 73, 74, 79, 93, 98, 99, 100–104, 108, 110–115, 126, 128, 129, 139, 140, 142, 146, 147, 152, 153, 155, 160, 165, 192, 304, 891, 901, 902, Oslo	28.9.1939–5.7.1942	Regt. no.	Meadow green
7x Rifle Regts (ex-Mot Inf)	5, 25, 33, 66, 69, 86, 93.	1.4.1940–10.7.1942	Regt no.	Meadow green (or kept white)
40x PzGren Regts (ex-Rifles)	1–3, 12–14, 21, 26, 28, 40, 52, 59, 63, 64, 66, 73, 74, 79, 93, 99, 101, 103, 104, 108, 110–115, 126, 128, 129, 139,140, 146, Norway, 155, 361, 382	5.7.1942–8.5.1945	Regt no.	Meadow green (or kept pink)
2x PzGren Regts (ex-Rifles)	21, 26	5.7.1942–8.5.1945	Regt no.	Golden yellow
16x PzGren Regts (ex-Mot Inf)	5, 15, 20, 25, 33, 51, 60, 67, 69, 86, 156, 200, 304, 361, 433, 891	5.7.1942–8.5.1945	Regt no.	Meadow green (or kept white)
19x PzGren Regts	16, 42, 50, 83, 98, 99, 100, 102, 139, 142, 147, 152, 153, 160, 165, 192, 2111–2113	Winter 1942–4.1945	Regt no.	Meadow green
9x PzGren Regts (late war)	Jüterborg 1, 2; Krampnitz 1, 2; Kurmark, Müncheberg 1, 2; Silesia 1, 2	31.1.1945–8.5.1945	-	Meadow green
2x PzGren Instruction Regts	901, 902	10.1.1944–8.5.1945	Gothic L	Meadow green
3x Feldherrnhalle PzGren Regts	FHH I–III	27.11.1944–8.5.1945	FHH runes	White
1x Panzer Fusilier Regt	79	12.1944–8.5.1945	Regt no.	White
Light Divisions:				
7x Cavalry Rifle Regts	4, 6–11	15.9.1938–28.9.1939	Gothic S / Regt no.	Golden yellow
7x Rifle Regts (ex-Cav Rifles)	4, 6–11	28.9.1939–15.9.1942	Regt no.	Meadow green (or kept golden yellow)
7x PzGren Regts	4, 6–11	5.7.1942–8.5.1945	Regt no.	Meadow green (or kept golden yellow)
4x Africa Rifle Regts	155, 200, 36, Africa	15.6.1941–13.5.1943	Regt no.	Meadow green
3x Africa Rifle Penal Regts	961–963	12.10.1942–13.5.1943	Regt no.	White

then comprised a PzGren Regt and a Panzer Bn with supporting services, and in April 1945 two Führer PzGren Regts, a Führer Panzer Regt and supporting services.

The Führer Grenadier Bn was formed April 1943 as Hitler's second bodyguard unit, expanding July 1944 to form the Führer Grenadier Bde, reorganized in September 1944 into I (Armd, halftrack), II (Mot, truck), and III Panzer Battalions. On 26 January 1945 the Führer Grenadier Division was formed with 2 PzGren Regts, a Panzer Regt and supporting services, redesignated from April 1945 as a Führer PzGren Regt and Führer Panzer Regiment.

The Kurmark PzGren Div was formed 31 January 1945 from the GD PzGren Replacement Bde, with a PzGren Regt, Panzer Regt and supporting services.

In 1945 the 13 remaining PzGren Divs mainly deployed as follows: nine (10, 18, 20, 25, GD, Brandenburg, FBD, FGD & Kurmark) in E. Germany; two (3 & 15) in W. Germany; and two (29 & 90) in Italy.

Table 7: Motorized Infantry & Panzergrenadier branch & unit insignia, 1937–8 May 1945

Units	*Unit designations*	*In existence*	*Shoulder straps*	*branch-colour*
Motorized Infantry Divisions:				
31x Mot Inf Regts	5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 25, 29, 30, 35, 41, 51, 53, 60, 67, 69, 71, 76, 86, 87, 90, 92, 93, 118–120, 125, 148, 149, 156, 200, 900	12.10.1937–17.11.1944	Regt no.	White
22x Mot Gren Regts	8, 11, 15, 20, 29, 30, 35, 41, 44, 51, 53, 60, 71, 76, 87, 90, 92, 118, 119, 120, 125, 156	15.10.1942–8.12.1944	Regt no.	White
3x Grossdeutschland Mot Inf Regts	GD, GD1/Grenadier, GD2/ Fusilier	1.10.1939–19.5.1943	GD, GD1, 2, strap loops, title	White
Panzergrenadier Divisions:				
15x PzGren Div HQs	3, 10, 15, 16, 18, 20, 25, 29, 90, Brandenburg, FH, GD, Führer Escort, Führer Gren, Kurmark	14.5.1943–8.5.1945	Gothic D / div no.	Meadow green
5x PzGren Regts (ex-Rifles)	104, 115, 129, 155, 361	5.7.1942–8.5.1945	Regt no.	Meadow green
14x PzGren Regts (ex-Mot Gren)	15, 20, 29, 30, 35, 41, 51, 60, 71, 76, 90, 119, 156, 200	7.9.1944–8.5.1945	Regt no.	Meadow green (or kept white)
3x Grossdeutschland Regts	PzGren, PzFus, Corps/Musketeer	19.5.1943–8.5.1945	GD, title, strap loops	White
1x Führer Escort PzGren Regt	Führer Escort; 4.1945, 1 PzGren Regt	12.1944–8.5.1945	GD, 2 titles	White
4x Führer PzGren Regts	1, 3–5	3.1945–8.5.1945	FG; GD 19.8.1944, title	White
4x Feldherrnhalle PzGren Regts	Gren/PzGren, Fus, 3, PzKorps	20.6.1943–27.11.1944	FHH runes, title	White
2x Brandenburg PzGren Regts	1 Lt Inf/1 Pz Lt Inf, 2 Lt Inf/2 Pz Lt Inf	15.9.1944–20.12.1944	Lt Inf badge, title	White

FIELD UNIFORMS & INSIGNIA

Refer to 'Infantry in Panzer Divisions, 1935–45' (above), except for the following.

Ranks

The lowest two ranks varied according to the branch of service: *Obergrenadier/Grenadier*: Mot Gren Regts until 1 December 1944; GD Grenadier Regt until June 1943.

Panzerobergrenadier/Panzergrenadier: PzGren Regts; PzGren Regts (ex-Mot Grens) from 1 December 1944; GD PzGren Regt from June 1943; Führer Escort Div, Führer Grenadier Div.

Oberfüsilier/Füsilier: GD Corps Fusilier Regt, 20 December 1944–March 1945; GD Fusilier Regt until June 1943.

Panzeroberfüsilier/Panzerfüsilier: GD Fusilier Regt from June 1943. *Obermusketier/Musketier*: GD Panzer Musketeer Regt, March 1945.

Branch & unit insignia

PzGren Divisional HQ troops wore meadow-green branch-colour, with a Gothic 'D' above the Div number on the shoulder straps.

PzGren Regts which were formerly Rifle Regts continued to wear meadow-green branch-colour and Regt numbers, while former Mot Gren Regts often retained white branch-colour.

Elite PzGren Divs wore white branch-colour, and usually a shoulder strap monogram and a cuff title. PzGren Div Grossdeutschland personnel wore the third-pattern cuff title in Sütterlin script on the right sleeve. By mid-1944 economy-pattern cuff titles were being issued in machine-embroidered silver-grey thread on inferior quality cloth. In late 1944 the fourth pattern was introduced, with 'Großdeutschland' in more legible copperplate script machine-embroidered in silver-grey thread with edging on a black cloth cuff band. GD PzGren and PzFus Regts continued to wear their white and red shoulder-strap loops, respectively. The Kurmark PzGren Div wore the 'Großdeutschland' cuff title and shoulder-strap monogram.

Führer Escort Div personnel wore 'GD' shoulder-strap monograms, white branch-colour, and the GD cuff title. It is assumed that personnel assigned to security duties at Hitler's 'Wolf's Lair', 'Eagle's Nest' or Reich Chancellery headquarters also wore on the left cuff the 'Führerhauptquartier' cuff title – either the first-pattern woven or embroidered in yellow silk Gothic script (with or without a hyphen after 'Führer') and edging on a black rayon band, introduced 7 October 1940, or the second-pattern in hand-embroidered aluminium Sütterlin script on a fine black wool band with aluminium 'Russia braid' edging, as introduced 15 January 1941. Führer Grenadier Div troops wore the 'Großdeutschland' cuff title, but no 'GD' shoulder-strap monogram. A divisional cuff title was planned but never manufactured.

The Brandenburg PzGren Div was authorized on 17 August 1944 a cuff title on the right sleeve: 'Brandenburg' in silver-grey machine-embroidered Gothic script on a black cloth band with silver-grey 'Russia braid' inset edging. The two Motorized Light Infantry Regts wore the M1942 Jäger badge on the right upper sleeve: a spray of three green oakleaves on a dark green oval with green or white inset edging. The 1st Regt wore a narrow white cloth loop around the shoulder straps, 2nd Regt a red loop.

Four PzGren Divs are known to have worn unofficial metal divisional badges on the left side of various headgear: 3rd PzGren Div, a slanted Cross of Lorraine; 16th PzGren Div, the 'Windhund' inherited from 16th Mot Inf Div; 20th PzGren Div, a brass anchor; and 90th PzGren Div, a diagonal bayonet across a map of Sardinia.

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